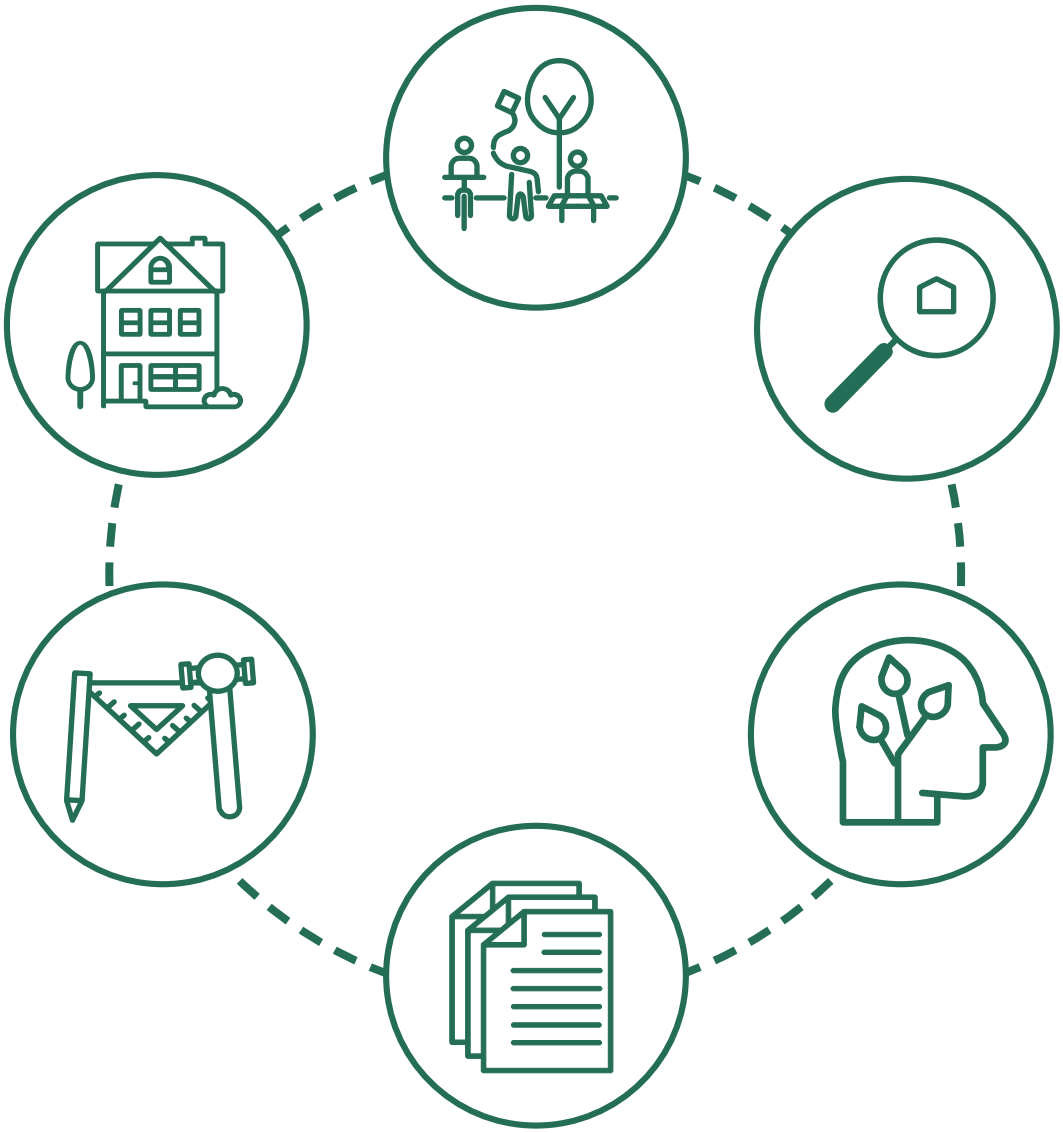
MERTON COUNCIL
FUTURE MERTON

SMALL SITES TOOLKIT

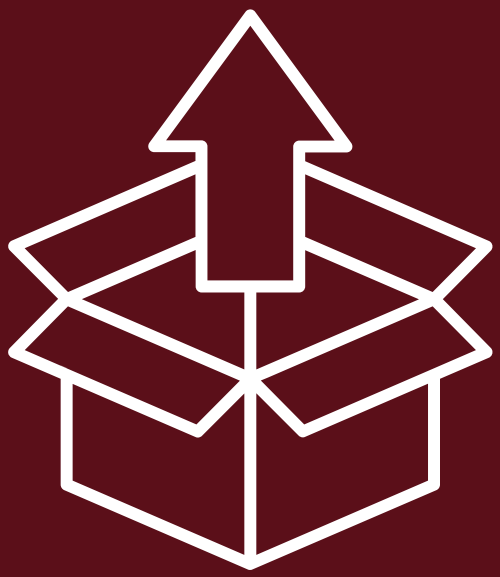
01. DESIGN GUIDANCE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE



CONTENTS PAGE

The places in which we live have a significant impact on our wellbeing and quality of life. As new homes are built in the Borough, we want to maintain and amplify the qualities that make Merton distinct.
Our Small Sites Toolkit SPD will give guidance to help craft new homes that contribute to great places to live, work and play.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS A SMALL SITE?

A small site is defined in the London Plan as a site that is below 0.25 hectares in area. Merton's Small Sites Toolkit Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been developed to provide design guidance for future applicants building new homes on small sites, however much of this guidance can also inform non-residential developments also.

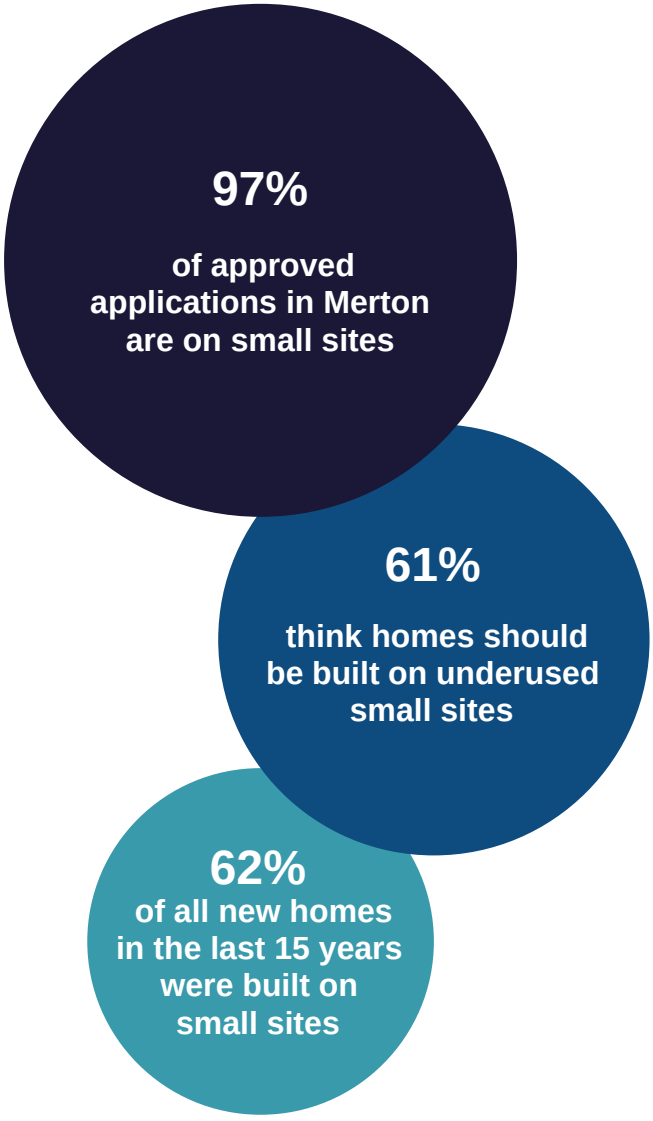
Garages with decades worth of belongings, forgotten and unused ends of gardens, lofty underused roof space and vacant or underused pieces of land all have been crucial for housing delivery in Merton.

These types of site will continue to offer opportunities to grow Merton's housing stock. These small projects offer the potential for sensitive, incremental and consistent supply of new homes in the borough. Over the last 15 years, small sites have provided over 60% of built homes borough-wide and account for over 95% of approved applications.

Currently, our growing population and low housing supply has meant that house prices and private rents are becoming unaffordable for many. The challenge we face as a borough is delivering enough homes to those who need it, while maintaining high quality standards, tackling the effects of climate change and improving our neighbourhoods in the process.

In July 2020 Iceni Projects engaged with over 2,000 Merton residents to learn more about the public's perception of development. Amongst the findings of the report, we learnt that the majority of residents (61%) think new homes should be delivered on 'underused small sites'.

The SPD provides a design-led framework to help optimise the housing capacity of small sites. It aims to help craft homes that are of a high quality, enhancing the character of local neighbourhoods, and meet the needs of residents of Merton. We want our new homes to be 'Made in Merton'.



1.2 POLICY CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and London Plan and their supporting guidance place great emphasis on design to achieve high quality buildings and places. The NPPF encourages plans and supplementary guidance to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage through visual tools such as design guidelines.

It is crucial that future development forms part of the character of Merton, and that careful design consideration has been given to achieve this. Once adopted, this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) seeks to provide design guidance in the form of a toolkit to better inform applicants on their projects on small sites.

It should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The London Plan 2021
- London Plan Guidance and Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Merton's Local Plan
- Merton's Supplementary Planning Documents
- Merton's Borough Character Study
- Merton's Explanatory Note on Approaches to Sustainable Design and Construction
- Merton's Conservation Area character appraisals
- Merton Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011)
- Neighbourhood Plans

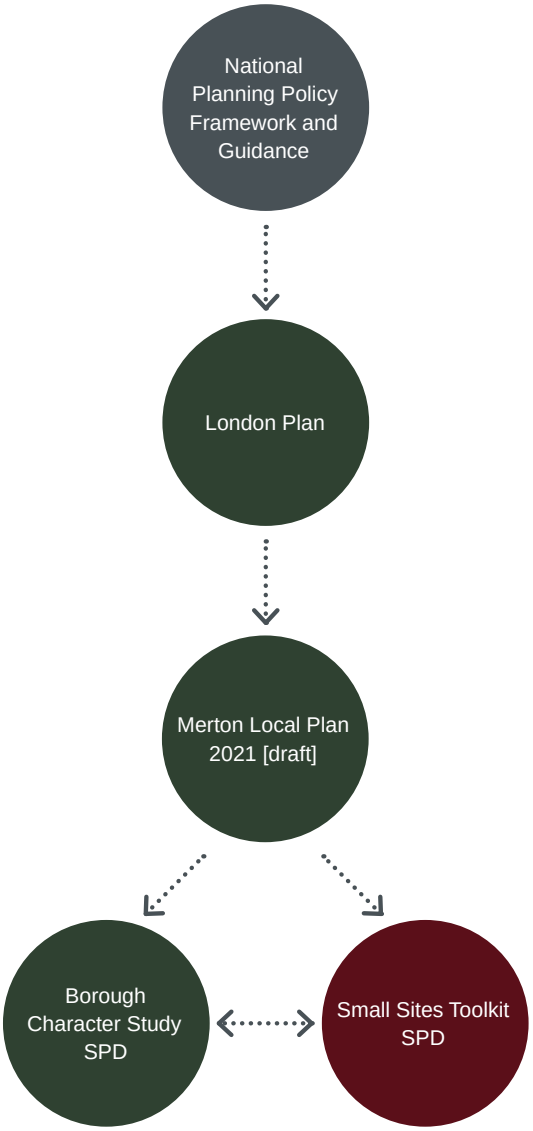


Fig.1.2 Schematic of the policy context.

1.3 **WHO IS THIS FOR?**

The Small Sites Toolkit provides design guidance for residential-led projects that provide new homes on sites that are below 0.25ha in area. It is primarily for:

- developers and their design teams, who prepare applications for planning permission;
- planning officers, who assess planning applications;
- councillors, who make planning decisions; and
- local residents, businesses and their representatives.

This toolkit will help determine planning applications and inform the Council's pre-planning application service. Beyond providing design guidance to improve the quality of future developments, it forms part of a wider strategy to support incremental growth in the Borough through small sites.

Our toolkit gives guidance on the planning process in addition to the key considerations on how to deliver high quality outcomes for your project.

2 HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

2.1 WHAT'S IN THE TOOLKIT

This document contains a variety of tools to assist you when designing a development on a small site. The toolkit includes:

01. Design Guidance
A sequence of questions and recommendations to guide you when designing your project. Merton Council will use these guidance notes to appraise your project during the planning process.

02. Case Studies
A selection of relevant case studies illustrating exemplar developments that have been delivered on small sites. Using thoughtful solutions the designers of these projects have successfully overcome some of the obstacles a small site development may encounter.

03. Design and Access Statement Template
As part of your planning application, you must produce a Design and Access Statement (DAS). A DAS will help explain and justify your proposal. The template has a checklist of necessary information to include with your application to make sure Merton Council can accurately appraise you project.

2.2 BUILDING A DESIGN TEAM

We strongly recommend you engage with a competent architect, designer and/or planning professional early in the design process. They can help ensure that your project meets your requirements as well as relevant policy and guidance.

Using registered architects and/or competent agents to design your project will benefit your application. Good quality design will increase the value your development. Their experience will help inform your brief and requirements for a positive and better valued outcome.

For more complex or significant projects, you may require the assistance of a planning consultant to advise you throughout the planning process. It is important that your design team includes consultants that can produce information that satisfies Merton Council's planning and policy requirements.

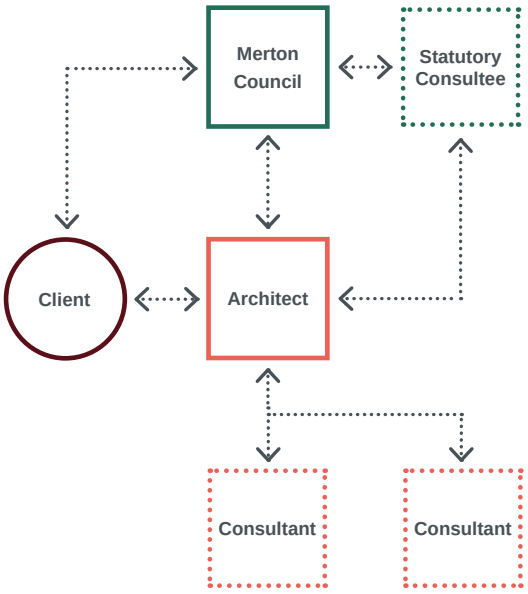


Fig.2.1 The design team

2.3 **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

An architect and/or planning professional will be able to confirm the consultants you need for your project. Below is a list of consultants you may need to form your design team:

Architects design and oversee the construction of buildings as well as managing the design team.

Town planners / Planning consultants provide technical advise on planning policy.

Energy consultants advise on energy systems that can meet Merton's current energy targets.

Conservation architects provide design and construction advice on proposals involving heritage assets.

Quantity surveyors give realistic build and project costs.

Transport engineers advise on the effect of proposals on the transport network.

Structural engineers advise on the most efficient structural solutions.

Services engineers advise on issues related to sustainability and energy systems.

Arboriculturalists advise on matters related to existing or proposed trees.

Landscape architects provide design services on landscaping.

Ecologists advise on issues relating to biodiversity.

Engagement consultant advise on improvements to designs by consulting with the public and other stakeholders.

The process and requirements for applications differ depending on the significance and complexity of the project. The diagram in the opposite page shows an overview of the planning process from initial proposals to construction on site.

Merton's Planning Department provides a pre-application advice service where planning officers will comment on your initial design and highlight any potential planning issues. It is most beneficial for this to take place early in the design process. We recommend this route especially if the site is complex and constrained.

Subject to the scale and complexity of your development, pro-actively engaging with local residents and community groups as part of the design process can positively contribute to the design development. Their local knowledge can positively shape the places they live and applications that engage during the design process will be looked at favourably.

To find out more about the planning process please visit the Planning Portal and Merton Council's Validation Checklist.

Fig.2.2 (Facing page) - Schematic of the planning process

START

START

A good design team from the start can help ensure that your project meets your requirements as well as relevant policy and guidance.

BRIEF

A good brief will help guide your design team. Briefs should be informed by Merton's Local Plan policies and Small Sites Toolkit. Early engagement with local residents and community groups can positively contribute to the brief and design.

DESIGN PROCESS

Your design team can make use of Merton's pre-application advice service. You may be invited to make use of our Design Review Panel (DRP) at this stage and/or after submitting your application.

SUBMIT APPLICATION

Applications may be either '*full*' or 'outline applications'. Visit the Planning Portal for more details.

VALIDATION

If all relevant documents have been submitted your application will be validated. Otherwise a request will be made for additional information. A decision will be made within an agreed time period.

CONSULTATION

Notice of your application will be publicised for a 21 day period (by way of site notice/ letters to neighbours or a press site) and views of neighbours and other interested bodies will be sought.

SITE VISIT

The case officer for your application will make a visit to your site in order to help assess your proposal.

DECISION MADE

Applications are determined under delegated powers or at Planning Applications Committee if it generates a lot of public interest. If your application is rejected you may change your proposal and re-submit a new application.

CONDITIONS

Planning permission may be granted with planning conditions. It will be specified whether conditions are to be discharged before, during or after construction.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is used to make improvements in the borough and is mandatory for all new developments. Approvals may come with Planning Obligations requiring subsequent financial contributions.

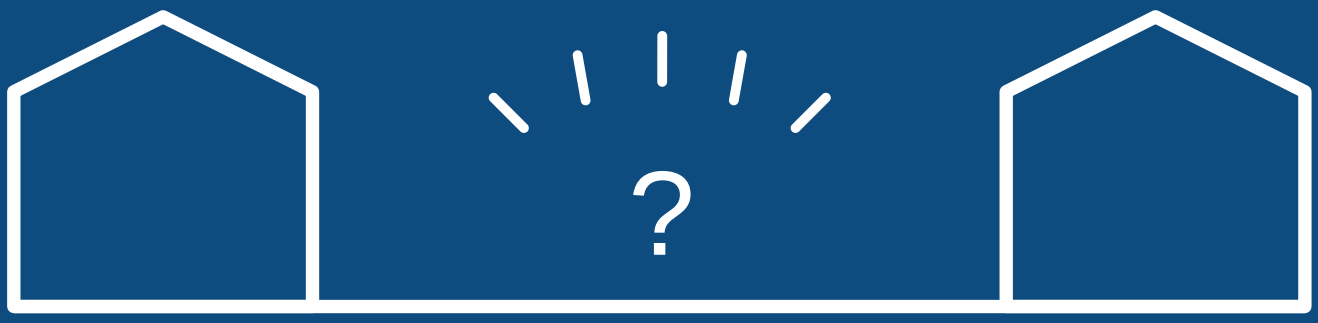
APPEALS

An appeal can be made to the Planning Inspectorate if your application is rejected or not determined within the agreed application time period.

BUILD

Typically, construction must begin within 3 years of the date permission was granted Your project must comply with Building Regulations. Merton Council offer a Building Control service that will help you deliver a safe and compliant project.

The distinct conditions of small sites help to define a suitable approach for development. Well-designed homes on small sites are best achieved through well-considered explorations of site conditions.



3 SITE CONDITIONS

3.0 SITE CONSTRAINTS

The development potential of a site is affected by many factors, some of which cannot be seen. Therefore it is important to investigate the site thoroughly to minimise any surprises later in the project. Some practical and legal issues to consider include but are not limited to:

- site ownership
- neighbouring boundary conditions and party wall agreements
- public right of way / shared access
- easements and covenants
- underground utilities and services such as water or data cables
- land contamination
- delivery and storage of construction materials
- mature trees and vegetation and existing natural environments

Planning constraints that may affect the development potential of your site may include but are not limited to:

- conservation areas and listed buildings
- flood zones
- water and wastewater drainage
- metropolitan open land (MOL)
- green infrastructure
- tree preservation orders (TPO)
- transport network

We strongly advise considering using our pre-application service if your site is significantly affected by one or more of these constraints.

3.1 SITE CHARACTER

There is a rich diversity of development on small sites across all neighbourhoods in the borough. A uniform approach to all small sites is not possible nor desirable. This makes it very important that future development is guided by the character of the local neighbourhood. More information on Merton's neighbourhoods can be found in our Borough Character Study.and Character Appraisals.

The Character Study and Character Appraisals provides guidance on context-led design. This study should be used during the design stages of work to better inform your proposal. Where areas have a strong character the aim will be to **reinforce** the existing character. In other areas there may be opportunities to **re-examine** what is there with opportunities for improvement. In areas with less existing positive character there may be opportunities to **re-imagine** the character of these areas. More details can be found in the Borough Character Study.

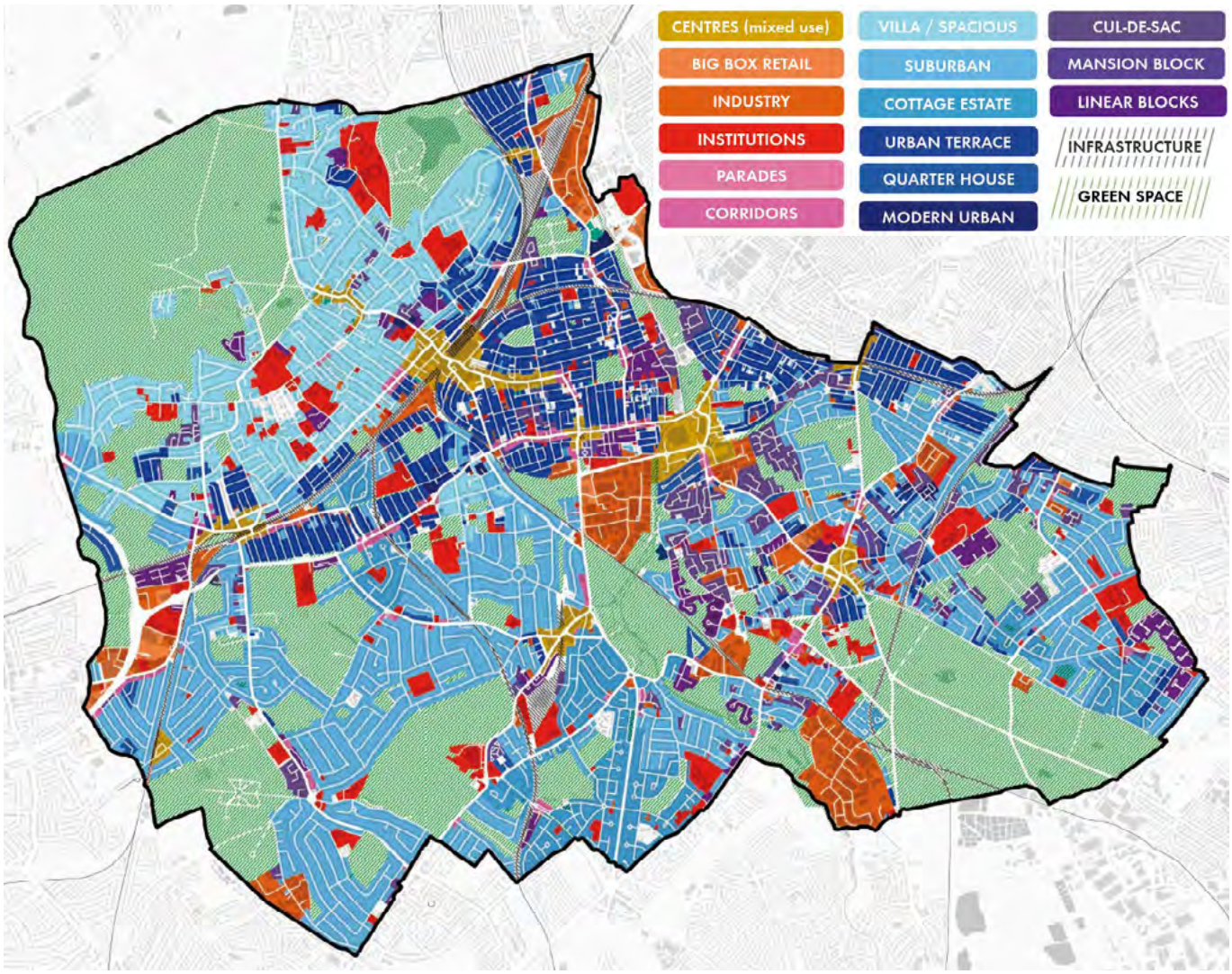


Fig.3.1 - above. Plan of Merton highlighting the different building typologies in the borough. Merton Character Study

Fig.3.1 - right. Table highlighting opportunities of different building typologies. Merton Character Study

3.2 CONTEXT-LED GROWTH

Growth opportunities for small site development can be found across the borough. The Borough Character Study, section J, highlights potential opportunities across all block / street structures with some holistic guidance on best practice approach.

Within each of these environments highlighted in the Character Study are distinct small site types. Each of these types requires different design considerations and some developments may be a combination of more than one type.

The following pages provide an overview of each of these types.

- **Existing buildings:** remodelling and adapting an existing building.
- **Rooftop sites:** upward extension development on existing buildings.
- **Street facing sites:** developments that directly addresses a street
- **Backland sites:** developments that indirectly address a street, commonly to the rear of buildings.

no.	Typologies / Environment	Existing building types within blocks	Potential opportunities / forms of intensification	Objectives of intensification (beyond housing provision)
I.1 Perimeter residential-led forms				
	Metroland / Suburban	Semi-detached, detached, short terraces, quarter house	Surface parking, ambiguous green open spaces, loft/rear extensions, backlands, amalgamation of plots	• Maintain continuous active frontages along perimeter • Clear delineation of public/private space • Reinforce/complement the existing character (Garden city/cottage style, Metroland or terraced streets)
	Garden city principles / cottage estate	Semi-detached, cottages, terrace	Ambiguous green open spaces, loft/rear extensions, backlands, amalgamation of plots	
	Urban perimeter	Terrace, Villa, quarter house, mews, apartment blocks	Infill, corner/end of terrace, garage sites, backlands, roof/rear extensions, amalgamation of plots	
I.2 Non-perimeter residential-led forms				
	Higher density free-form	Mansion blocks, linear blocks, towers, maisonettes, mansion blocks	Infill, surface parking sites, partial redevelopment, comprehensive redevelopment, roof extensions	• Reintegrate the urban fabric • Connect dead-end streets • Improve delineation of public/private space
	Lower density free form	Houses, semis, maisonettes, bungalows	Infill, surface parking sites, garages, partial redevelopment, comprehensive redevelopment	
Non-residential led forms				
I.3	Centres (allocated town centres)	Ground floor commercial units, offices, residential / storage above	Change of use class, infill, surface parking sites, garages, roof extensions	• n/a - too context specific
I.4	Campus environments	Industrial sheds, big box retail parks, education/ institutions	Change of use class, partial redevelopment, surface parking sites, yards, roof extensions	• Improve thresholds • Rebalance/diversify mix of uses • Activate underutilised land • Make environments better suited to pedestrians and human scale
I.5	Linear - parades and corridors	Mixed use blocks, parades and terraces, petrol stations	Partial redevelopment, infill, ambiguous green open spaces, surface parking sites, roof extensions, backlands development	
Tall buildings				
I.6	Tall buildings	Taller elements than the prevailing context	Roof extensions, conversion, partial or comprehensive redevelopment	• n/a - too context specific

3.3 EXISTING BUILDINGS

Conversions and refurbishment of existing buildings can add to the mix of tenure types available in a local area. Existing houses and flats have the potential to be divided to provide more homes.

Permitted Development rights allow the conversion of offices, some shops and sui generis uses into residential use. If you are pursuing this form of development you must inform the Council first through a prior notification application. However there are strict limitations on appearance and materials, additional floor area and height. We recommend using PD rights alongside a full planning application to achieve better quality, development value and benefits for residents and the wider neighbourhood.

Permitted Development rights may have been removed by conditions attached to previous planning consents, or by Article 4 Directions. You should check with the Council whether these constraints will affect your plans.

Extra attention to design is crucial when converting spaces that are not purpose built for habitation. A good design approach and well-sized spaces will add value to the development.

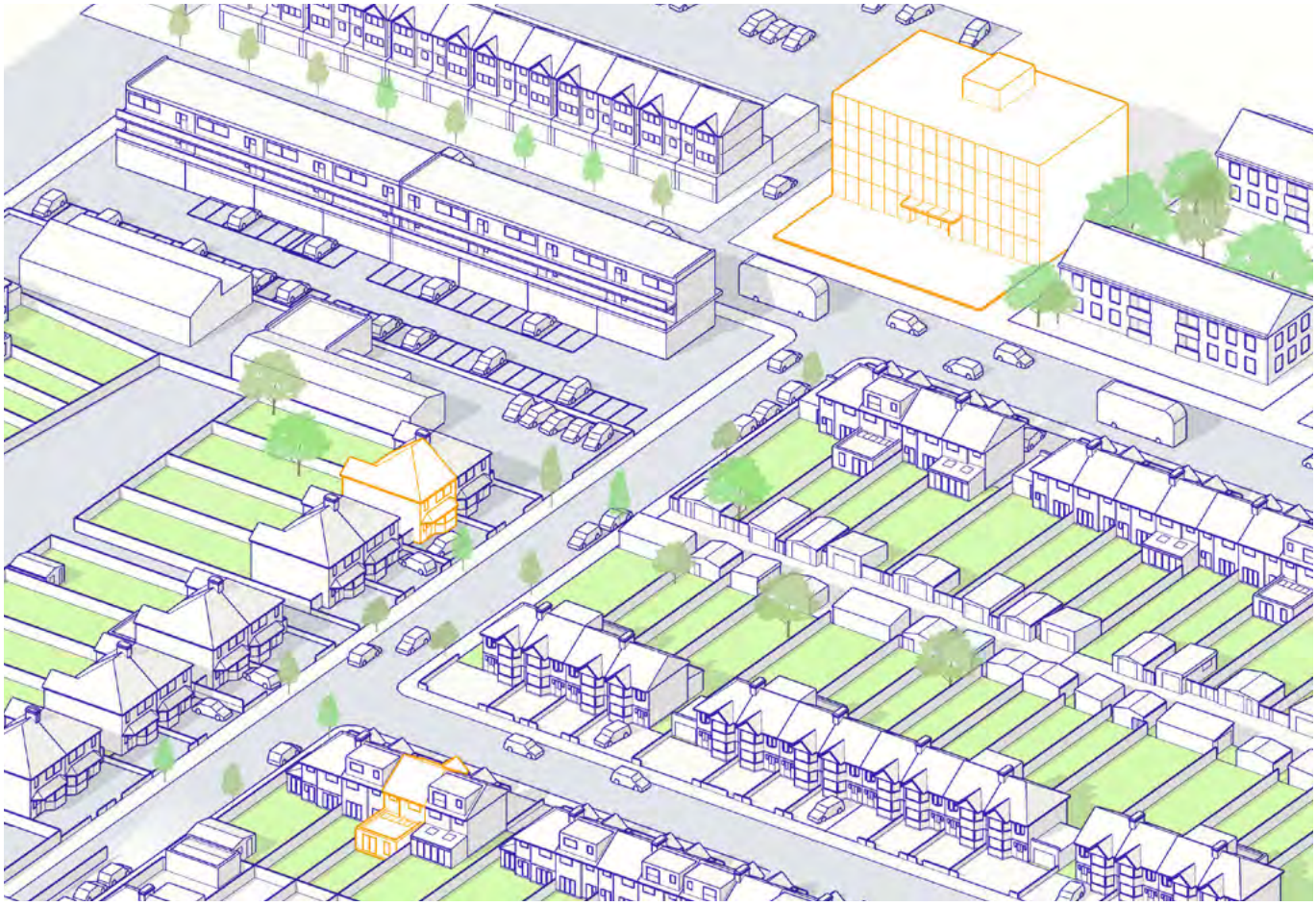


Fig.3.2 - Examples of opportunities for conversion and refurbishment projects in a suburban context.

Fig.3.4 - Framfield Road, Mitcham by **James Grayley Architects**
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.3 - Salt Yard, Wimbledon, by **Francis Philips Architects**
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.5 - Britannia Point, Colliers Wood by **KDS**

3.4 ROOFTOP SITES

Underused rooftop spaces on residential and mixed-use buildings might allow for the creation of new, self-contained dwellings. Although these sites have a number of obstacles to overcome they also carry significant potential to provide new homes and reinvigorate existing buildings.

Some rooftops present the opportunity to bring forward neighbouring sites for development collaboratively. This allows for a more cohesive design approach to the development by resolving issues related to ownership, materials, character and access.

Some examples of rooftops sites include shopping parades, former council housing blocks, former industrial blocks.

Permitted Development rights allow the upward extension some buildings. If you are pursuing this form of development you must inform the Council first through a prior notification application. Permitted Development rights may have been removed by conditions attached to previous planning consents, or by Article 4 Directions. You should check with the Council whether these constraints will affect your plans.

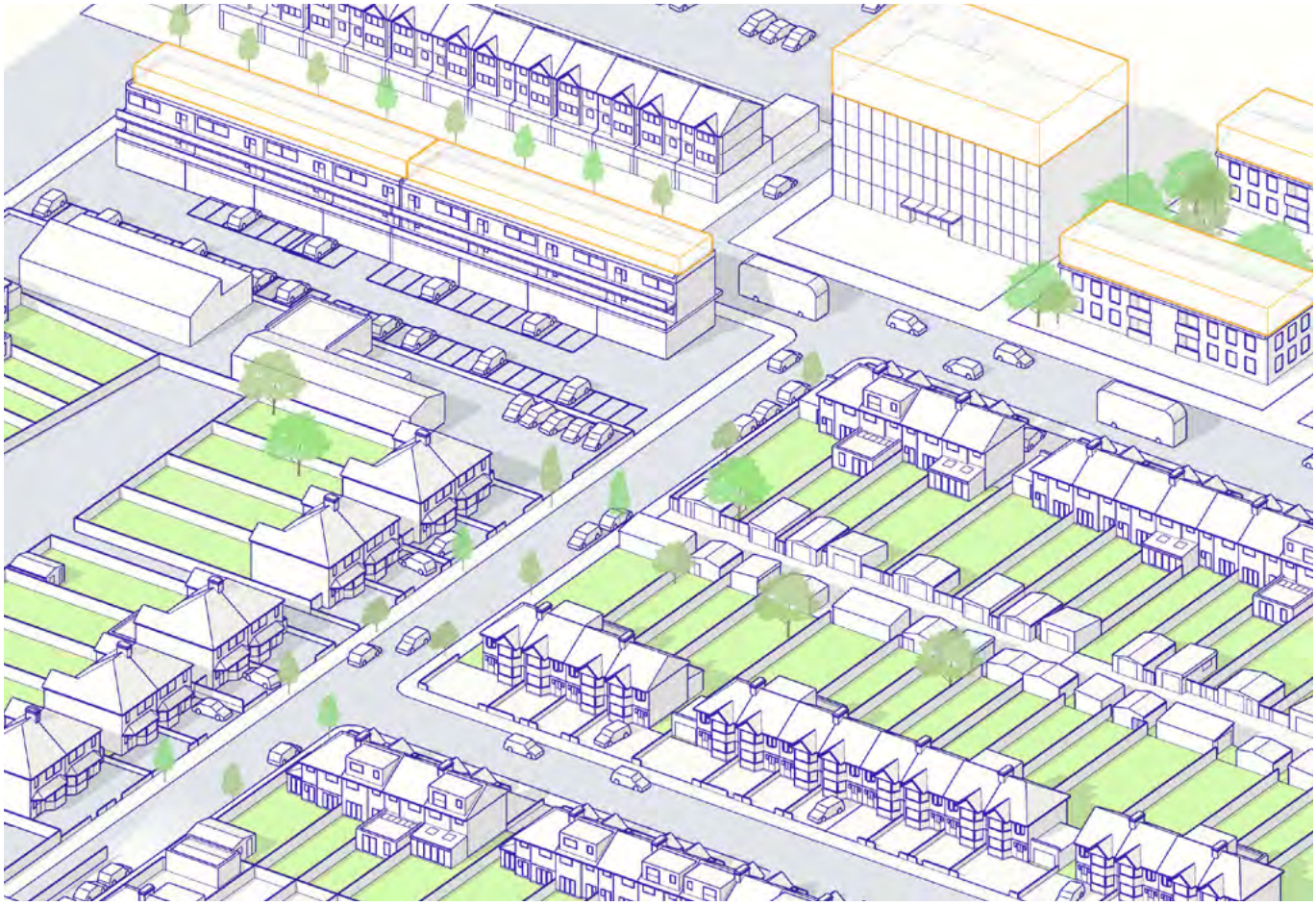


Fig.3.6 - Examples of opportunities for rooftop development projects in a suburban context.

Fig.3.7 - Neptune House, Wimbledon
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.8 - Marion Court, Tooting by **Apex Airspace**
[Credit: Apex Airspace]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.9 - Chandos Way and Britten Close, Barnet by **RcKA**
[Credit: RcKA]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

3.5 STREET-FACING SITES

Street-facing developments have the potential to make a significant and positive contribution to the character of any street. Their prominent location requires careful attention to the prevailing characteristics of the neighbourhood in order to complement its character.

The approach to developments in street-facing conditions rests heavily on formal considerations such as building heights, frontage lines, roof forms and separations distances to inform the character of proposals.

Street-facing sites include existing street-facing buildings, corner plots, existing street-facing ancillary buildings like annexes, outbuildings and garages and other buildings.

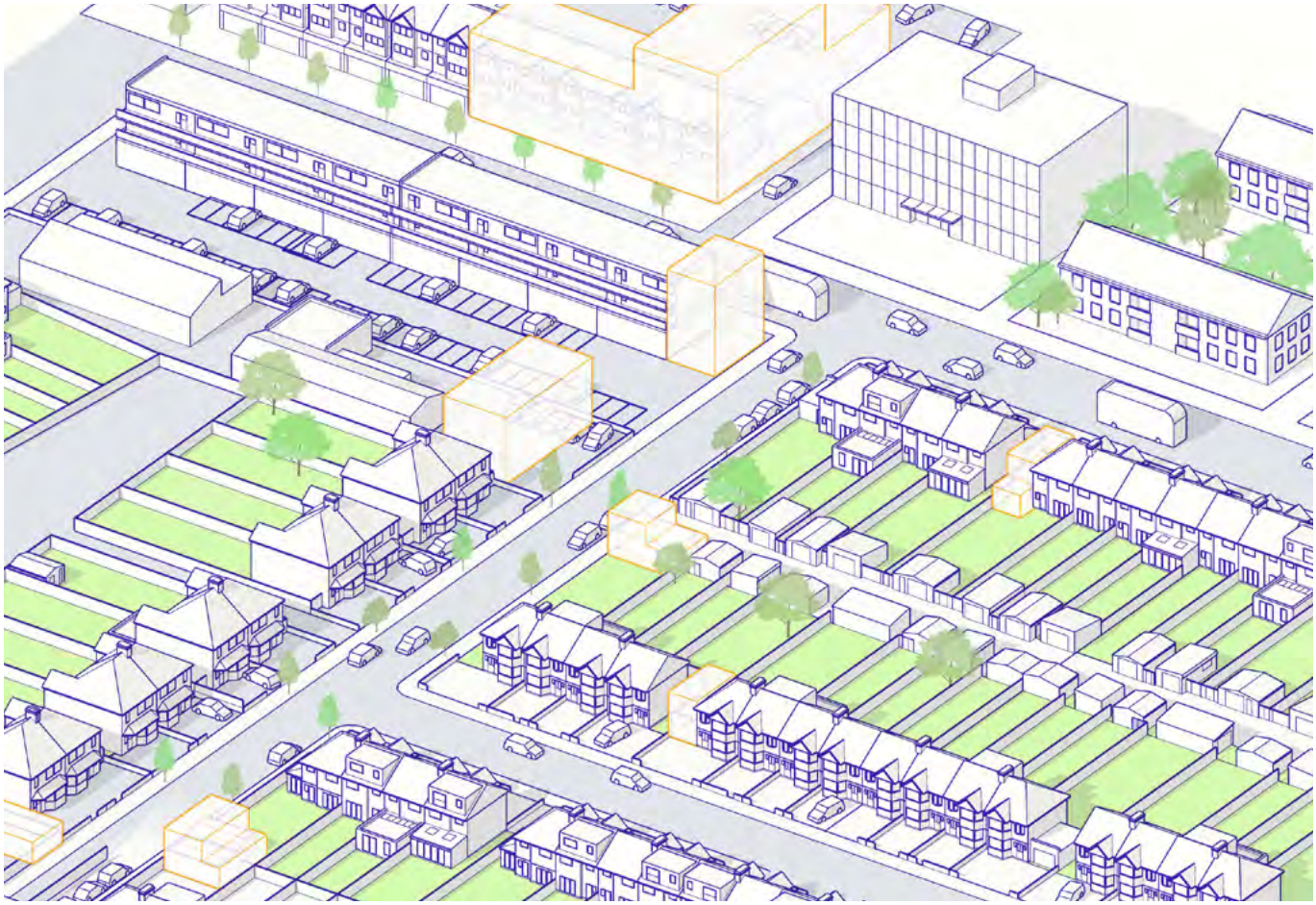


Fig.3.10 - Examples of opportunities for street-facing development projects in a suburban context.

Fig.3.11 - Lucien Road, Wimbledon by **Harp & Harp Architects**
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.12 - The Cricketers, Mitcham by **Stephen Bradbury Architects**
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.13 - Y-Cube, Mitcham by **RSHP**
(Left: Before. Right: After)

3.6 BACKLAND SITES

In contrast to street-facing conditions which are generally characterised by the existing streetscape, backland sites require more careful consideration of neighbouring boundaries, views and massing to enable development.

Backland sites in Merton have provided the basis for innovative buildings that sensitively respond to their neighbours. These sites have the potential for creating clusters of buildings with a unique character. They present an opportunity to improve the mix of uses and accommodation in a neighbourhood.

A site is considered to be backland when its development will result in buildings not fronting the street. A backland site can be a landlocked site, a plot of land behind existing buildings such as rear gardens and private open spaces, vacant or underused spaces, usually within predominantly residential areas.

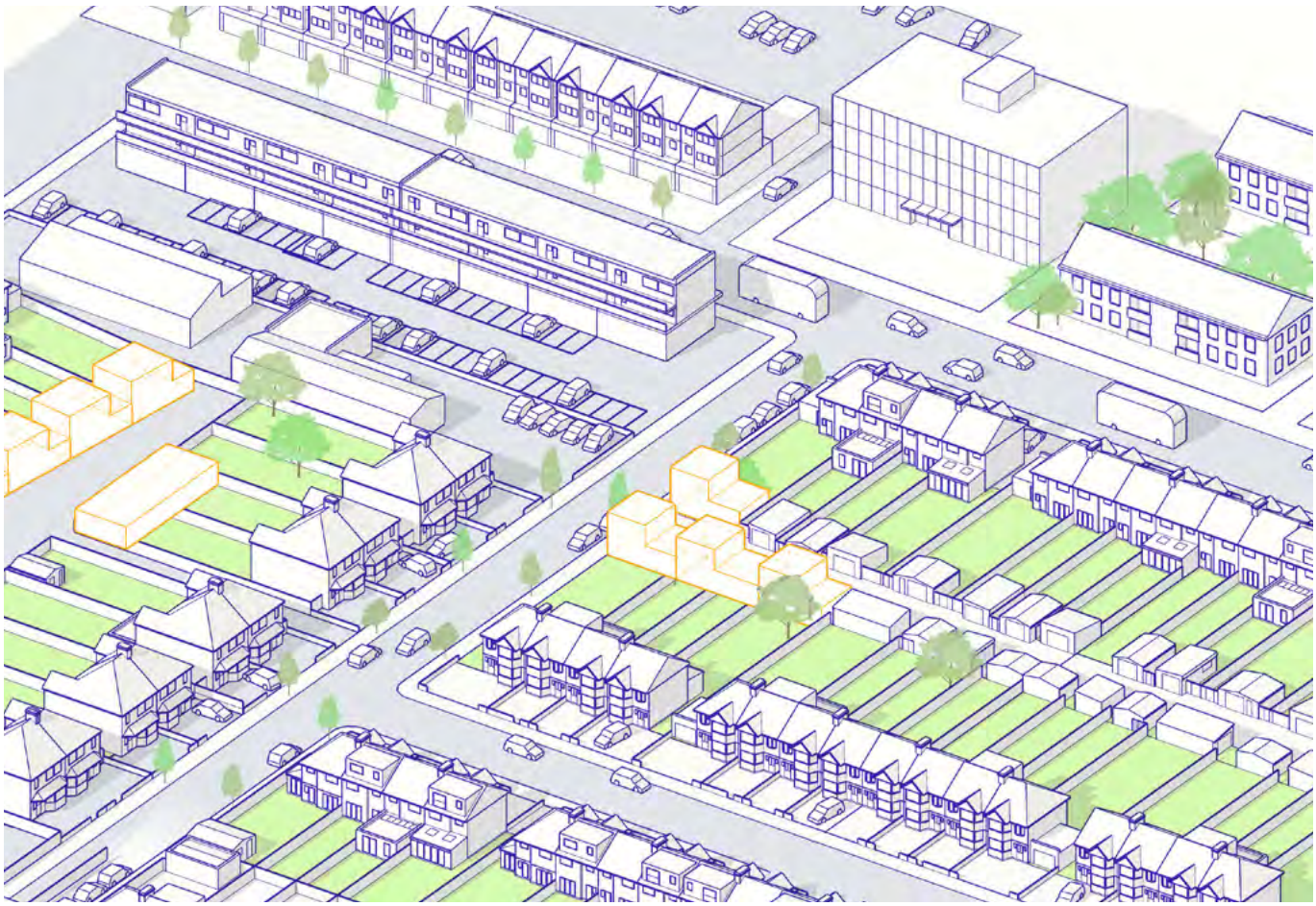


Fig.3.14 - Examples of opportunities for backland development projects in a suburban context.

Fig.3.15 - Nineteenth Road, Mitcham by **Decent Goodfellow Architects** [Credit: Decent Goodfellow Architects]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.16 - Grosvenor Court, Wimbledon, by **HaleBrown / Simon Brown Architects**
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.17 - Moray Mews, Haringey by **Peter Barber Architects**
[Credit: Morley Von Sternberg]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

3.7 UNDEVELOPABLE SITES

Some sites will not be suitable for providing homes due to one or more constraints. They may have an awkward shape, small footprint, overly exposed or have expensive utilities running beneath them. It is possible for these sites to be developed to support local residents by providing quality public spaces to be enjoyed by all. See images on the following page for examples.

3.8 FUNDING PROPOSALS

Every year Merton Council invites entries to a 'Neighbourhood Fund', which supports the realisation of projects that can improve Merton's neighbourhoods. The funding for the Neighbourhood Fund comes from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – which is money developers are required to pay as part of planning consent to support the demands their development will place on the local area. Proposals can come from individuals as well as organisations. If you would like more details or want to keep informed on the next round of funding please go to Merton's Neighbourhood Fund webpage.

Spacehive is crowd funding platform aimed at improving local civic and community spaces. It has successfully funded a number of projects from the Camden Highline to a temporary water slide in the centre of Bristol. For more details see the Spacehive webpage.

3.9 ASSEMBLING SITES

You may find that your site is not conducive to development due to its size, shape or other restrictions. Working with property owners and other stakeholders to combine contiguous properties can create larger parcels of land more suitable for development. Land assembly can help secure good design by avoiding over-development of very small sites and improve the local neighbourhood through an investment in the public realm.

Fig.3.18 - The Kerb Garden, Lambeth by **The Edible Bus Stop**
[Credit: The Edible Bus Stop]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.19 - Brokky's Crofte, Walthamstow by **Max Dewdney Architects**
[Credit: Max Dewdney Architects]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

Fig.3.20 - Pop Brixton, Lambeth by **Makeshift**
[Credit: Makeshift]
(Left: Before. Right: After)

The following principles have been developed to appraise design quality in small site developments. These principles will help guide your response to site conditions and to embrace opportunities - and more importantly achieve the objective of creating unique and characterful places where people would like to live.

4 GOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

GOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

All developments are expected to demonstrate a high degree of adherence to these principles. This is an overview of each design principle. The following chapters will provide more details as well as examples of best practice.

MADE IN MERTON

New homes must support our vision for the borough set out in Merton's Local Plan and complement the character of neighbourhoods through good design.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

New homes must be people-focussed. Prioritising health and wellbeing creates successful places for the future.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

New homes must provide spaces that are functional and fit for modern day living.

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

New homes must be physically robust and environmentally considerate.

Proposals for new homes must demonstrate how the character of the surrounding neighbourhood has been taken into account. Your design should investigate what makes up local character and make use of our Borough Character Study that gives an insight to existing conditions, needs and aspirations of Merton's neighbourhoods.

5 MADE IN MERTON

OBJECTIVES

1 Respond to the vision of the borough set out in Merton's Local Plan.

2 Respond to local character and needs set out in Merton's Borough Character Study and Character Appraisals.

3 Make use of local knowledge and gain local support through community engagement.

5.1 GUIDANCE NOTES

How does your project learn from the neighbourhood?

5.1.1 Merton's Local Plan (Draft) is designed to help guide how the borough develops over time and create a vision that enables the council to successfully and responsibly manage growth while ensuring the best interests of the borough's residents and businesses are upheld. The plan guides decisions on whether planning applications are granted. Your proposal must respond to the vision set out in Merton's Local Plan (Draft).

5.1.2 Whether your project is a single house or a flatted development, it is important to look beyond your site boundary. Merton's Borough Character Study and Character Appraisals provide an insight to the unique character of neighbourhoods in Merton and can supplement your bespoke character analysis.

5.1.3 Our Borough Character Study sets out development opportunities and several approaches to context-led growth in the Merton. The study illustrates how developments can respond to local character and how new homes can be successfully integrated into the existing context. Your proposal should make use of the suggested approaches to intensification detailed in the study.

5.1.4 A character-led approach does not require copying the form and style of existing buildings in the neighbourhood. However, proposals should demonstrate that materials, massing and fenestration complement the neighbourhood.

5.1.5 Your chosen materials should be robust and respond to the character of the neighbourhood. Contrasting and statement use of materials may be appropriate and be complementary providing they are well detailed. We recommend providing a rendered/ coloured elevation when submitting an application.

5.1.6

Fig.5.1 - The Local Plan sets out a strategic vision for the future development of Merton in order to responsibly manage growth in the borough.

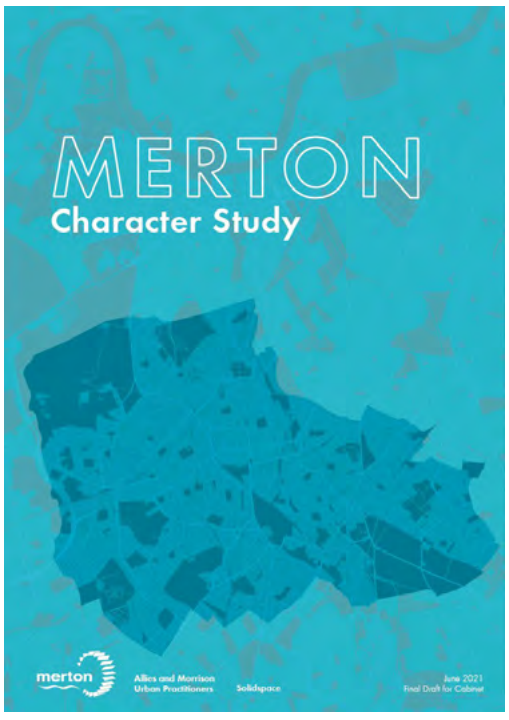


Fig.5.1 - Merton's Character Study provides best practice guidance on context led growth.

5.1.7 All proposals should be carefully designed to fit into their unique context. Take opportunities to improve the public realm, such as providing new pedestrian and cycle links or enhancing streets with new planting. Your project has the ability to improve a neighbourhood and unlock neighbouring sites. Thinking for the long term will create better and more cohesive places for the future.

5.1.8 Extensions to existing buildings present an opportunity to repair or renew the facade of the host building which contribute to the appearance of the street. Consider reinstating historic features, re-pointing brickwork, replacing windows, removing defunct services and improving communal spaces.

5.1.9 Sites with heritage value, such as listed buildings, locally listed buildings and conservation areas, require a sensitive approach in order to preserve their character. We advise appointing a professional with experience in heritage contexts to appraise the heritage value of your site and proposal. Make use of the relevant Historic England advice and guidance documents.

5.1.10 The natural environment is vital to Merton's character and must be maintained. No work can be carried out on trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or trees in conservation areas protected by the provisions of section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, without the consent of the Council. Using an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, you must demonstrate that your proposal will not adversely affect surrounding trees.

5.1.11 To visually justify your design approach you should include a street elevation with neighbouring properties in your submission. This might also be a 3D rendered image.

Fig.5.2 - A sensitive conversion and extension of a listed building to provide new homes.
(Eagle House by **Michaelis Boyd Associates**)
[Credit: Octagon Developments]

Fig.5.3 - A well detailed addition to a cottage built in 1906.
(Dainton Cottage, Surbiton by **WR-AP Architects**)
[Credit: WR-AP Architects]

Have you engaged with neighbours and those affected by your proposal?

5.1.12 On submission, your application will be made public for 21 days. This gives an opportunity for members of the public to support or object and give feedback.

5.1.13 However, projects that engage with local people and groups during the design stages often have better outcomes and are looked upon more favourably by Merton Council.

5.1.14 The level of engagement should be appropriate for the scale, location and significance of the new development.

5.1.15 Local people, businesses and organisations are a pool of knowledge on their neighbourhood and its potentials and can positively contribute to the outcome of a development. Public engagement presents an opportunity to improve the quality of your proposal and build local support.

5.1.16 Even the smallest proposals can benefit from discussing initial ideas and intentions with neighbours. You should consider speaking with your neighbours prior to submitting your application in order to gain their support and address any issues they may have during the design stages.

5.1.17 Public engagement for significant projects should aim to reach as many people as possible and take various forms to meet the needs and preferences of different groups. Engagement may be conducted through face to face meetings, online platforms and events. Engaging young people should be a particular priority.

5.1.18 Consider extending your engagement process beyond planning and through to construction and operation. This helps to benchmark the process and build a good reputation with local people.

Fig.5.4 - Engagement event.
Events with local people can positively help shape a project and gain community support.

Is the massing of your proposal informed by its surroundings?

5.1.19 The massing of your proposal should be informed by the character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

5.1.20 On backland sites, new developments should be subservient in scale to neighbouring buildings and original host buildings to avoid overbearing and over dominant massing. This can be achieved by articulating the massing of the building. Careful design consideration must be given to minimise overlooking and overshadowing to neighbouring homes. 3D perspectives from neighbouring views and sunlight studies can provide evidence of appropriate massing.

5.1.21 Where backland sites can accommodate multiple homes you should demonstrate that the massing does not feel overwhelming or wall like. This can be achieved by stepping roof lines to allow light and views between buildings and articulated massing to give the development rhythm.

5.1.22 The massing and scale of the proposal must be carefully considered from street level views around the site and views from impacted neighbours to prove that the massing is appropriate. Please refer to chapter 6: Putting People First, for more detailed guidance on a massing approach. Where proposals are significantly taller, a separate Townscape Study may be required.

5.1.23 There are many instances in Merton where buildings are taller than their neighbours and are still in-keeping with the local character. If your proposal is taller than its surroundings there must be a strong design rationale to your approach and it must be justified visually. 3D perspectives and street elevations can be used to illustrate the impact of your proposal.

Fig.5.7 - Backland massing approach.
The proposal for a two bedroom home is located in the former garden of a house in Pollards Hill, Mitcham. The proposal is single storey and designed to avoid overlooking to and from neighbouring homes whilst being discreet in it's massing.
(Nineteenth Road, Pollards Hill by **Decent Goodfellow Architects**)

Fig.5.5 - Views and vistas.
Where sites are in prominent locations, such as at the end of a long view or on a prominent corner, careful consideration must be given to the proposals impact to neighbouring streets.

5.1.24 Not all sites are appropriate for tall buildings. Tall buildings are defined as a minimum of 6 storeys or 18 metres measured from the ground to the floor of the uppermost storey as set out in the London Plan. Tall buildings are better suited to visually prominent sites such as sites on street corners or sites that terminate long views. Distinctive proposals can be used to enhance the character of the neighbourhood by providing local landmarks and improve way-finding. Your proposal can be made more distinct by careful articulation of material, massing and scale. See Fig.5.6.

5.1.25 On sites that are appropriate for taller buildings, the scale and massing of the proposal must be informed by its immediate context. Well designed massing can help to mediate between existing low-rise buildings and taller proposals. Proposals must visually justify how the massing and scale responds to its context. See Fig.5.8.

5.1.26 Proposals must consider their future impact on townscape. Where there is potential for a number of taller buildings to come forward on multiple neighbouring sites consideration must be given to their impact on views and street level experience. You may be asked to investigate the impact of the development on neighbouring sites using a masterplanned approach to indicatively show the potential of all sites.

5.1.27 In urban locations your development should be aligned with the prevailing block structure. This will help to create a more permeable massing and coherent design. Greater permeability also allows for the repair of the finer urban grain of historic centres.

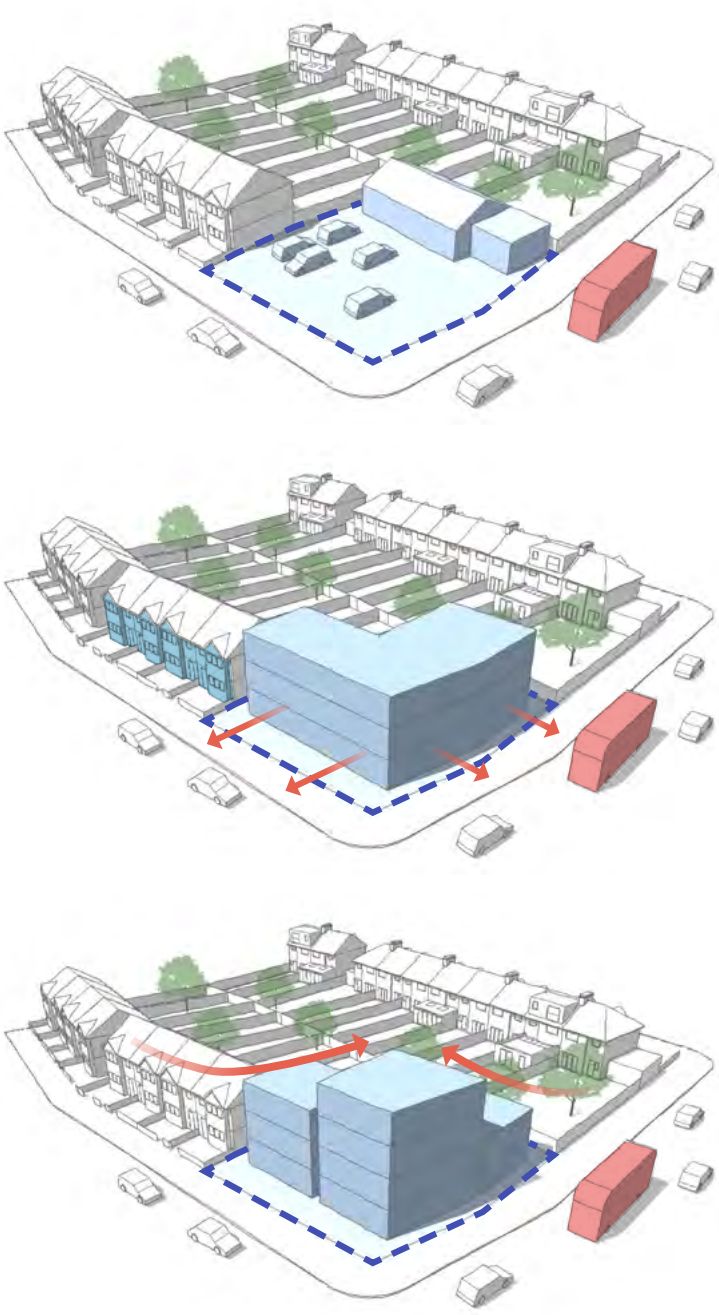


Fig.5.8 - Example massing approach
Applicants must visually demonstrate how the proposal responds to it's immediate context using good urban design principles, such as layout, active street frontages and appropriate massing.

(Top) Example corner site.

(Middle) Street facing elevation in-line with neighbouring buildings. Building turns corner to improve urban block form.

(Bottom) Massing steps up from neighbouring buildings with tallest element on the corner which has the potential to provide more corner dual aspect homes.

How does your proposal respond to the language of the street?

5.1.28 A positive pedestrian experience on the street creates successful places. Your proposal should respond to existing rhythms and street frontages to strengthen the street scene. Street elevations and 3D perspectives are recommended to justify your design approach.

5.1.29 Where there is a strong rhythmic street composition, you should seek to continue this in your proposal. This can be achieved through visual breaks and considered use of materials. Conjoining buildings is strongly discouraged as it creates a terracing effect and breaks the rhythm of the street elevation. Visual breaks must be used to maintain the rhythm of the street. See Fig.5.9.

5.1.30 The frontage of your development must not exceed the frontage of its neighbour and/or host property. Moving beyond this line will only be acceptable if:

- The character of the street is such that the frontage of buildings step and there is no clear street frontage.
- It can be justified that it provides a positive interface with the street.

See Fig.5.10 for details.

5.1.31 Maximise active street frontages to improve natural surveillance and create a sense of community. Large areas of inactive street frontage, such as doors to bin and cycle stores, garage doors and blank façades must be kept to a minimum.

5.1.32 Contemporary proposals with good architectural design can make a positive contribution on the character of the street. A considered material palette, articulated massing and good attention to detail can all contribute to a successful building.

Fig.5.9 - Maintaining rhythm
Conjoining buildings can create long street frontages and have a negative impact on the character of the street.

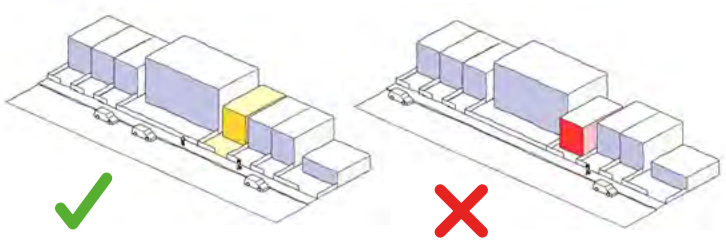


Fig.5.10 - Building front alignment
If the building front exceeds the frontage of its neighbour, it could have a negative impact on the character of the street.

Fig.5.11 - A contemporary 3 storey building continues the roof forms and rhythm of its neighbours.
(Photograph in Lyncroft Gardens by **Groves Natcheva Architects**)

5.1.33 Homes in many areas of the Borough are characterised by defensible spaces towards the street such as front gardens, hedges, boundary walls and fences. If your proposal sits in such a neighbourhood, it must reflect this feature. This will give new residents a sense of security and privacy.

5.1.34 Front gardens and boundary structures are important elements that define the character of a street. New boundary structures should respect the prevailing style along the street.

5.1.35 Consider planting trees and shrubs to improve air quality and the appearance your proposal. Planting may contribute to the wellbeing of residents by protecting garden spaces from busy roads and improve biodiversity levels.

5.1.36 In historic settings when working near listed buildings or in conservation areas your proposal must respond sensitively to its context. Historic Englands guidance on The Setting of Heritage Assets gives further information.

5.1.37 Whether it's the front door to a new home, or the entrance into a shared lobby, the approach to the front door, house name and/or number must be clearly readable from the street. This can be achieved by clearly differentiating the entrance into the building from other openings in the facade.

5.1.38 If converting a shop front into homes, please see Merton's Shop Front Guidance for further design guidance.

Fig.5.12 - The entrance of these villa blocks protrude towards the street and stand higher than the concrete banding marking each level. This creates a welcoming entrance that is distinct from other openings in the building fabric.
(Finsbury Park Villas, Haringey by **Sergison Bates Architects**)
[Credit: Stefan Müller]

5.1.39 On upward extensions additional massing and height can be added through setting back the upper storeys to preserve the scale of the street.

5.1.40 Set back upper stories must be appropriately proportioned with the building below to avoid feeling top heavy. 3D perspectives and street elevations can be used to illustrate the impact of your proposal. Contrasting materials often work best with set-backs to provide a clear distinction between the upper and lower storeys. See Fig 5.14.

5.1.41 When providing outdoor amenity on the set back level, careful consideration must be given on achieving appropriate privacy and separation between neighbours. Full height screens often look out of place if not designed well.

5.1.42 Mansards are also an effective way of providing additional habitable storeys whilst maintaining a specific massing from street level.

5.1.43 Where mechanical plant equipment is required on the roof of the development, proposals should have uncluttered roof profiles and equipment should not be seen from the street level. There are many ways to hide these such as setting the plant equipment away from the edge of the roof, or integrating the plant with the design of the building. Flues should also be located in locations that create minimal impact to the elevation. Good forward planning for plant requirements should be done early in the design process. See Fig.5.13 for details.

5.1.44 The locations of drainage pipes, servicing and other ancillary equipment such as satellite dishes on the outside of the building should be considered early in the design process and shown in drawings. They should be simple and have a minimal impact on the primary facade.

5.1.45 The impact of your proposal on existing transport networks must be considered early in design process. Larger proposals must allow for pedestrian and vehicular access to and from busy arterial routes.

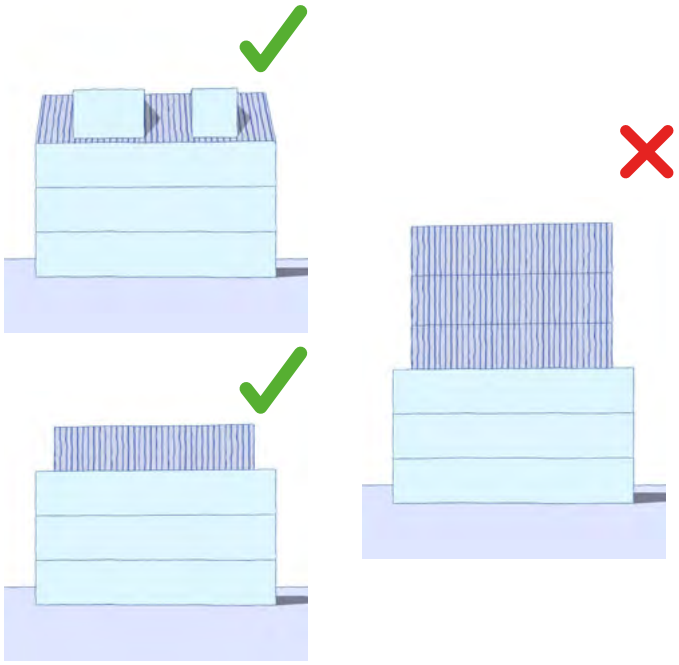


Fig.5.14 - Mansards and set-backs
Left - mansard and set-backs when appropriately scaled can provide additional habitable area whilst maintaining a smaller street presence.
Right - roof extensions must be of an appropriate scale and proportion and be subservient in scale to the lower stories of the development.

Fig.5.13 - Plant and services on roof.
Seeing plant equipment from street level can have a negative impact on the character of the street.

CHECKLIST

☐ **How does your project learn from the neighbourhood?**

- Responding to Merton Local Plan
- Context led design
- Working with heritage

☐ **Have you engaged with neighbours and those affected by your proposal?**

- Early engagement with local people and groups
- Addressing concerns during the design stages

☐ **Is the massing of your proposal informed by its surroundings?**

- Responding to context and surroundings
- Townscape and street views
- Assessing the impact to neighbouring buildings

☐ **How does your proposal respond to the language of the street?**

- Positive impact on the character of the street
- Maximising active street frontage

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From the street to the front door, there are a sequence of spaces that provide a place for chance encounters and encourage positive behaviours. These guidance notes ensure that the amenity of neighbours is not adversely affected. Careful thought must be given to the health and wellbeing of both residents and neighbours.

6 **PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST**

OBJECTIVES

1. Create internal and external communal areas that encourage interaction between neighbours and communities.
2. Provide a mix of housing types and sizes that are accessible for all and meet the needs of present and future residents.
3. Protect the amenity of neighbours through thoughtful design.

6.1 GUIDANCE NOTES

Have you considered the health impacts of your proposal?

6.1.1 The site of the development must be appropriate for the proposed use. Homes located near busy and noisy infrastructure will undergo a high level of scrutiny to ensure that the health and wellbeing of future occupants is not compromised.

6.1.2 Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Consider how your development is spatially arranged and where possible position habitable rooms away from sensitive façades. You may be required to carry out an Air Quality Assessment on sites adjacent sources of air pollution, such as transport corridors. See Merton's Air Quality SPD for more details.

6.1.3 Noise and vibration from transport networks, neighbours and the streets can affect health and wellbeing. Consider positioning habitable rooms away from sensitive façades where possible. You may be required to carry out a Noise Impact Assessment on sites with sources of significant noise.

6.1.4 There are well understood physical and mental health benefits from active travel. Your proposal should promote walking and cycling by enhancing the environment through better walking and cycling connections. See the TfL's Healthy Streets toolkit, Walking Action Plan and Cycling Action Plan for more details.

6.1.5 The impact of green spaces on health is well established. New developments should include tree planting, urban greening and sustainable drainage systems in order to mitigate air quality problems on transport corridors, water quality problems and local flooding and to increase shade.

6.1.6 A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for developments of 10 or more homes in areas of poor air quality. More information can be found in Merton's Local Plan.

Fig.6.15 - The new homes provide a dual aspect with living rooms and kitchens facing the busy railway line opposite. This helps position bedrooms on the quieter side of the building.
(Mint Street Housing, Tower Hamlets by **Pitman Tozer Architects**)
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

Have you considered the impact of the proposed development on neighbouring properties?

6.1.7 As a rule of thumb, proposals that are located to the rear of neighbouring buildings in residential areas should sit below a 25 degree line drawn from the middle of the lowest existing neighbouring habitable room window. If the proposal obstructs the 25 degree line, a detailed daylight/sunlight study must be submitted with your application. See Fig.6.16.

6.1.8 Upward extensions may result in an undesirable sense of enclosure to the street. To maintain the openness of the street, consider articulating the building form to allow good daylighting and a view to the sky from the street. This may help avoid overshadowing neighbours.

6.1.9 If any building work is required near, or on a shared property boundary you must inform the relevant owners. Shared property boundaries include Party Walls, such as a wall between separate properties and Party Structures, such as the floor between separate properties You may wish to appoint a Party Wall Surveyor to obtain the relevant notices required from your neighbours. You must give notice between 2 months and a year before you plan to start building works.

6.1.10 If your proposal affects the Party Wall, or you need to excavate foundations close to the boundary, you may need to give the affected owners a notice under the Party Wall Act. This is a Civil Act and the council does not have any enforcing power under the Act. See government guidance on party walls and building works for more details.

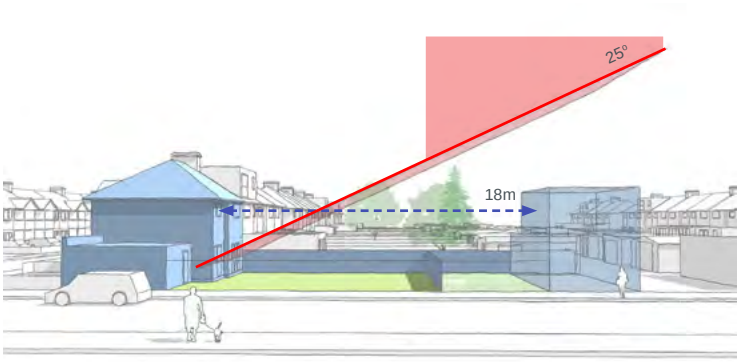

Fig.6.16 - Daylight sunlight to neighbouring windows
Proposals located to the rear of residential streets should be subservient to the street facing properties.

Fig.6.17 - A former industrial site surrounded by residential provides 10 houses and 4 apartments that are subservient to their surroundings. (Graveney Mews, Mitcham by **MAA Architects**)
[Credit: xx]

6.1.11 As a rule of thumb, the depth and height of a multi-storey rear projection should not exceed 45 degrees measured from the centre of the closest ground floor habitable room from the original structure of neighbouring buildings, see Fig.6.18 and Fig.6.19. Proposals must provide a strong design rationale and prove that the proposed massing will not appear overbearing from neighbouring properties. Side and rear elevations and perspective drawings can help justify your design approach. See BRE's Site Layout Planning For Daylight And Sunlight: a guide to good practice (BR 209) for more details.

6.1.12 Technical daylight and sunlight studies may be required where developments are taking innovative approaches to development to prove they are not significantly impacting neighbouring amenity.

6.1.13 Showing precedents of similar types of development in similar context's can help illustrate design intentions. The submitted Design and Access Statement should show a clear design rationale and evolution to justify the final design.

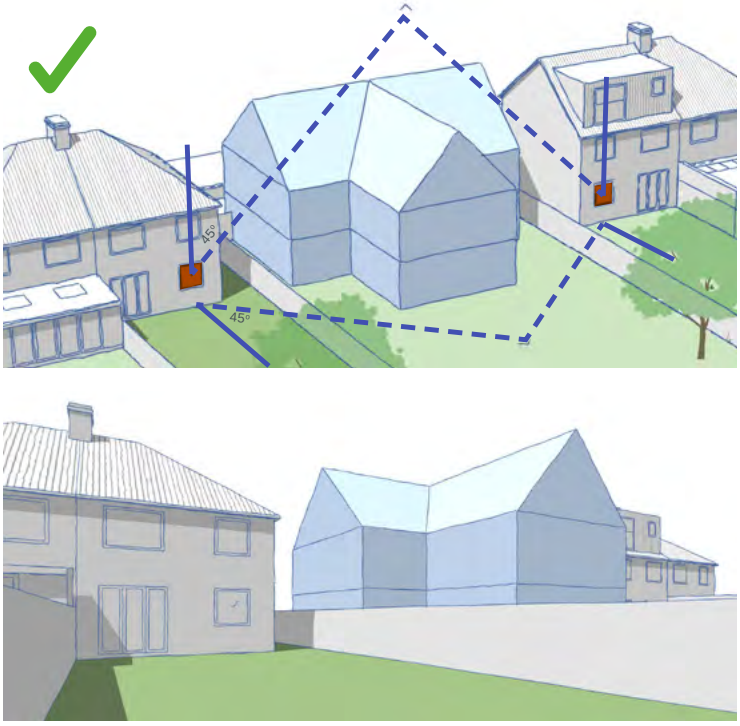

Fig.6.18 - Dominant rear projection.
The proposed building sits within the 45º zones and the massing reflects the character of neighbouring buildings. This is an acceptable approach.

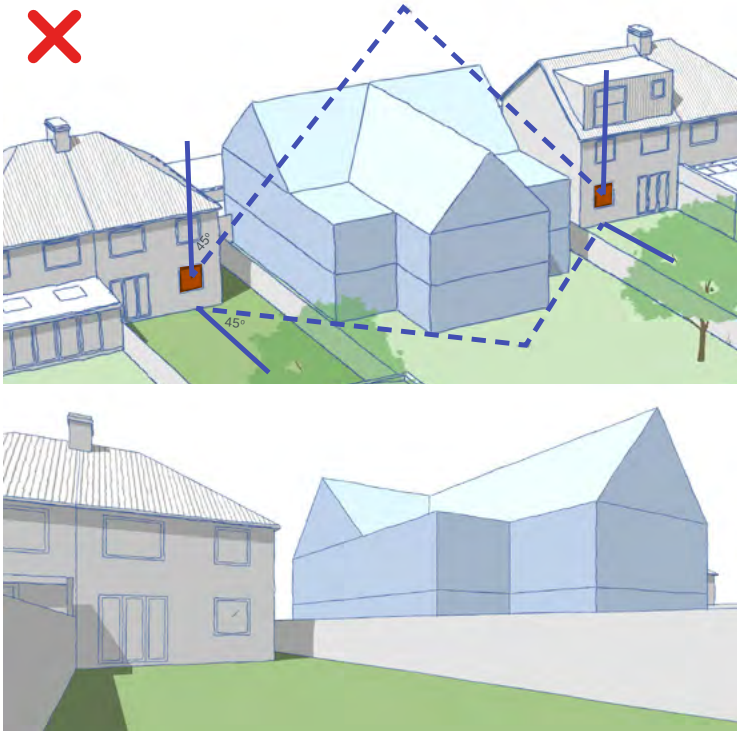

Fig.6.19 - Dominant rear projection.
Even though the proposed sits within the 45º zones, the massing disregards the character of neighbouring buildings and is out of scale. This is unacceptable.

How do your common areas foster community?

6.1.14 Communal space for circulation such as front entrance lobbies, stairs and corridors must provide a safe, functional and comfortable setting for chance encounters. Well-designed communal spaces can create a sense of pride in where a person lives.

6.1.15 Shared circulation should have views out with adequate ventilation and natural light. Designs based on double-loaded corridors are often poorly lit and ventilated. This makes for unwelcoming spaces that are avoided or neglected by residents.

6.1.16 Shared circulation spaces should be finished in robust materials in order to create desirable common spaces for residents.

6.1.17 Where you are proposing housing in conjunction with other uses in the building, give careful consideration to the separation of circulations routes. Your proposal must demonstrate how circulation routes will allow residents to maintain their privacy even with other users in the building.

6.1.18 Each dwelling should have its own separate entrance externally or from a shared circulation route. In the case of Houses of Multiple Occupation you must provide secure private spaces for each resident, that are separate and independent from shared spaces and circulation routes.

6.1.19 We encourage shared access to communal spaces across different tenures. You should avoid segregating entrances for different tenures.

6.1.20 Communal amenity spaces should be orientated to maximise the amount of daylight and sunlight and have a strong landscape approach.

6.1.21 Proposals with shared access routes must demonstrate that they will allow easy and safe access for pedestrians.

Fig.6.20 - A generous and naturally lit lobby gives a view through from the front door to the communal courtyard.
(Kings Crescent Estate, Hackney by **Karakusevic Carson Architects**)
[Credit: Karakusevic Carson Architects]

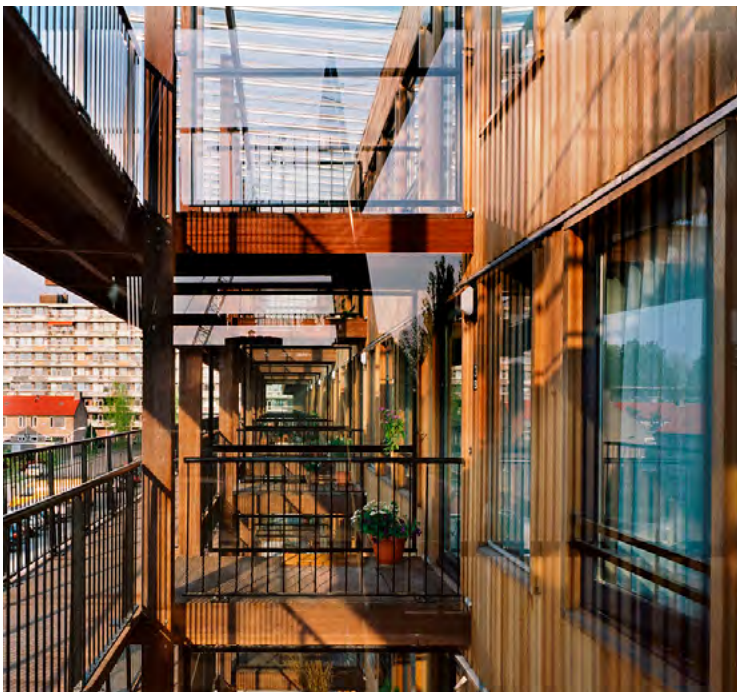

Fig.6.21 - Bridged gallery access provides semi public front garden and better privacy and daylight.
(Koekoekspreeuw, Amersfoort by **KCAP**)
[Credit: KCAP]

6.1.22 Proposed communal spaces should include design features that will encourage positive interactions between people from children to the elderly. Consider including public seating areas, communal gardens and large play areas where possible.

6.1.23 Spaces should be designed to be inclusive and intergenerational. Child friendly spaces are encouraged to support independent and safe mobility for children.

6.1.24 Communal spaces including play areas must be well-located on a part of your site exposed to plenty of daylight and sunlight during the day and avoid being overshadowed by proposed buildings.

6.1.25 Play spaces should be appropriately sized for the scale of the development and be located in areas that have good levels of natural light. We encourage play areas to be integrated with the overall landscape design and not a tokenistic afterthought.

6.1.26 Play spaces should also be located to allow for natural surveillance by parents, guardians and residents of your development.

Fig.6.23 - This self-build co-housing scheme on an backland site features shared facilities including a series of communal spaces surrounding the development.
(Copper Lane, Hackney by **Henley Halebrown Architects**)
[Credit: Ioana Marinescu]

Fig.6.22 - This extension to a council estate incorporates a communal play area overlooked by the new flats.
(Bourne Estate, Camden by **Matthew Lloyd Architects**)
[Credit: Benedict Luxmoore]

Have you considered accommodating a mix of uses and users in your project?

6.1.27 Consider the mix of tenure your proposal will bring to the neighbourhood and if this complements existing provisions.

6.1.28 Proposals for conversions must include re-provision of at least one family-sized unit where an existing family unit has been lost due to the proposal. A family-sized unit has a minimum of 3 bedrooms.

6.1.29 Proposals for the conversion of an existing building must ensure that any impact on utility, community facilities, infrastructure, or emergency services is fully mitigated. This requirement is normally satisfied by making alternative provisions on-site or elsewhere or by showing that the current uses are no longer needed by the community.

6.1.30 Sites in locations with commercial and business uses must be carefully designed to preserve the privacy of new residents. Proposals on these sites may also retain employment uses. Mixed-use developments have the opportunity to create a unique atmosphere with the variety of uses accommodated on the site.

6.1.31 In locations such as town centres, corridors and parades, mixed-use schemes should be prioritised with non-residential uses at ground level and residential units above.

6.1.32 Multi-generational living is a growing trend across London and in Merton. For this type of proposal you must consider the changing needs of future users by allowing for flexible layouts. Consider including capped-off services and maximising non-loadbearing walls to allow internal rearrangements.

6.1.33 Homes in Merton must meet the needs of our community including people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility, wheelchair users and older people. Please see Part M Building Regulations, M4(2) and M4(3) for more details.

Fig.6.24 - This scheme introduces a doctor's surgery and shop units at ground floor level with residences above.
(Croxted Road, Southwark by **Panter Hudspith Architects**)
[Credit: Panter Hudspith Architects]

CHECKLIST

☐ **Have you considered the health impacts of your proposal?**

- Using appropriate land uses for the site
- Promoting active travel
- Responding to air and noise pollution

☐ **Have you considered the impact of the proposed development on neighbouring properties?**

- Protecting the quality of neighbouring amenity
- Party walls and structures

☐ **How do your common areas foster community?**

- Inclusive and intergenerational shared spaces
- Well designed shared spaces inside and out

☐ **Have you considered accommodating a mix of uses and users in your project?**

- Providing a variety of home types, sizes and tenures
- Providing accessible homes

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Proposals must demonstrate that the new spaces can be practically used and enjoyed. All spaces must be carefully designed to support their intended function.

7 FIT FOR PURPOSE

OBJECTIVES

1 Create homes that can be built to a high standard.

2 Create spaces that are functional and give privacy.

3 Create spaces that are safe and usable inside and out.

7.1 GUIDANCE NOTES

Are internal spaces of a functional proportion and size?

7.1.1 Sizes of new homes must comply with the minimum space standards set out in the London Plan. It is encouraged that developments exceed these standards.

7.1.2 All proposals should use the most recent Approved Documents that provide guidance for how building regulations can be satisfied.

7.1.3 Spaces must be adequately sized to accommodate the activities they host. The Good Quality Homes SPG [Module C] draft provides many minimum critical dimensions new homes should comply with.

7.1.4 The minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.5m between the finished floor level and the finished ceiling level for at least 75% of the Gross Internal Area (GIA). Any area with a finished floor to ceiling height of less than 1.5m is not usable space and cannot be counted as GIA. This area should be highlighted in plans.

7.1.5 You should consider a range of storage needs from where coats are hung, to where large luggage could be stored. You must provide storage space to suit the size of your development. See The Good Quality Homes SPG [Module C] for more details.

7.1.6 Subdividing an existing dwelling into multiple dwellings always requires planning consent. The change of use of a building or part of a building to residential use sometimes requires a planning application. Please contact Merton's planning department for more details.

7.1.7 Not all existing buildings can be subdivided into multiple dwellings. Spaces created from subdivisions and conversions must be of a sufficient size to accommodate the activities they are designed to support. This is to ensure that new dwellings can be enjoyed and will support wellbeing. Plans should include furniture to illustrate that the sizes and proportions of rooms are appropriate.

Type of dwelling		Minimum gross internal floor areas+and storage (square metres)			
Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons(p))	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *	N/A	N/A	1
	2p	50	58	N/A	1.5
2b	3p	61	70	N/A	2
	4p	70	79	N/A	2
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	2.5
	6p	95	102	108	2.5
4b	5p	90	97	103	3
	6p	99	106	112	3
	7p	108	115	121	3
	8p	117	124	130	3
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	3.5
	8p	121	128	134	3.5
6b	7p	116	123	129	4
	8p	125	132	138	4

Fig.7.25 - Minimum internal space standards for new dwellings as per the new London Plan.

* Where a studio / one single bedroom one person dwelling has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39 sq.m. to 37 sq.m., as shown bracketed.

7.1.8 Drawings submitted to the council should show furniture arrangements to justify the dimensions and proportions of rooms. You should think carefully about the position of furniture to make sure they do not obscure views out or compromise circulation. Appendix D of the Approved Document M volume 1 of the Building Regulations includes a furniture schedule that should be accommodated for.

7.1.9 Open plan layouts are often considered to be the market preference, however there may be times where more separation between the kitchen and living area is preferable. If designing an open plan layout you must illustrate that there are clear distinctions between the kitchen, dining and living areas without compromising circulation or views out. The principal width of the living space should be at least 3.2m. Plans should show furniture arrangements to illustrate that the size and proportions of rooms are appropriate.

7.1.10 Consideration should be given to working from home providing a separation space from home-life. This can be achieved by providing a flexible room to be used as an office space. Alternatively, careful design of furniture in a multi-use space may provide adequate separation of functions.

7.1.11 The entrance storey of a new building should have access to habitable rooms and a WC.

7.1.12 The way homes are used changes over time and new homes must be designed to take into account current needs in housing and predicted future needs. This can be achieved by demonstrating that rooms are capable of flexible use and future adaptation.

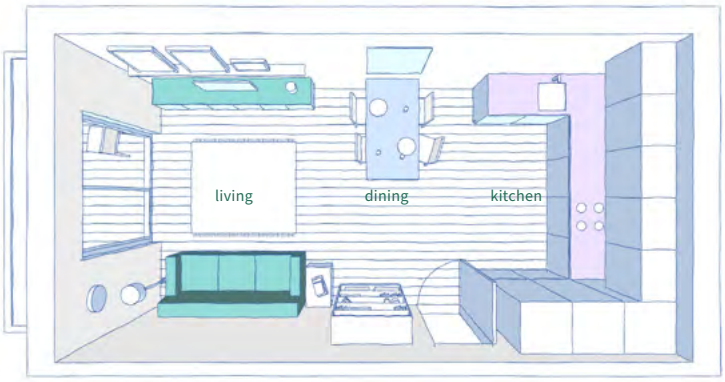


Fig.7.27 - Example of open plan living for a 2 person flat.
If planning for an open plan living/kitchen/dining space, drawings must illustrate a clear distinct zone for the kitchen, dining and living areas and circulation must not be compromised. It is recommended that the principal width of the living space is at least 3.2m. An unobstructed view and access to the home's private amenity will

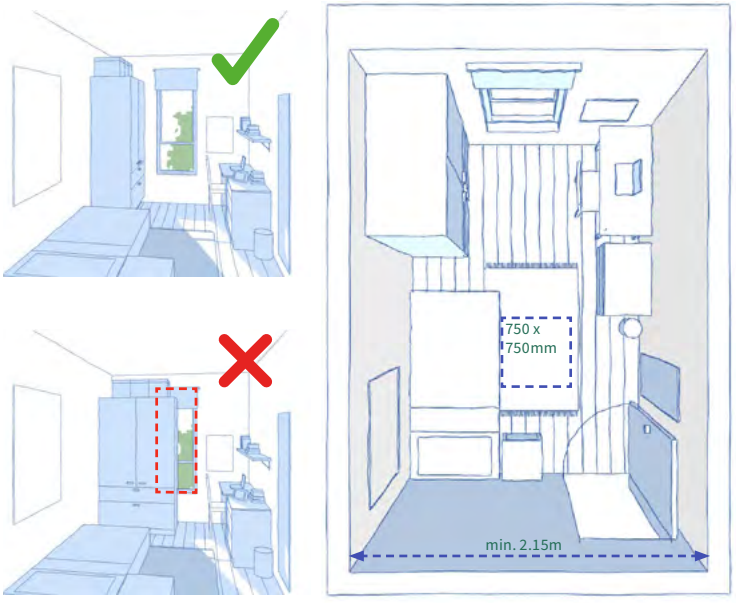


Fig.7.26 - Example single bed bedroom
Furniture should be shown on floor plans to illustrate how a room functions appropriately without compromising its use. Furniture should must not block windows or access routes - more details can be found in Approved Document Part M.
Plans must be flexible enough to accommodate furniture from the Part M Appendix D: Furniture schedule.
Room dimensions must meet minimum requirements set out in the Draft Good Quality Housing SPG found in Module C.

Have you allowed for adequate daylight and sunlight?

7.1.13 Adequate daylighting and sunlight are essential to wellbeing. When planning the dwelling layout, it is important to make sure that all habitable rooms have a good outlook and good levels of daylight and ventilation.

7.1.14 Non-residential buildings typically have deeper plans and taller spaces. This makes them difficult to convert into dwellings without compromising ventilation or access to daylight. Your dwelling layout must demonstrate that there will be adequate access to daylight and ventilation.

7.1.15 New homes should be dual aspect unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify the inclusion of single aspect homes.

7.1.16 The following types of dwellings are actively discouraged other than where there are exceptional circumstances:

- single aspect homes, in particular those that are north facing or contain 3 or more bedrooms.
- homes that are exposed to noise levels with adverse effects on health and quality of life.

7.1.17 New homes should achieve a minimum Average Daylight Factor target value of 1% for a bedroom and 1.5% for a living room.

7.1.18 Where the development is constrained you will be required to provide a daylight/ sunlight report to ensure that every room is receiving an adequate amount of natural light.

Fig.7.28 - Large windows fronting private and public courtyards allow ample daylight into this mews development of 5 homes (Spencer Courtyard, Finchley by **Kennedy Twaddle**) [Credit: Henry Woide]

Fig.7.29 - Well-considered natural lighting creates a welcoming atmosphere in this communal atrium.(Aylesbury estate by **Levitt Bernstein**) [Credit: Tim Crocker]

How does your proposal achieve visual and acoustic privacy?

7.1.19 Historically, visual privacy has been measured with an 18m separation distance, however this does not reflect the variety of spaces found in the borough. Carefully consider the orientation and arrangement of habitable rooms and the use non-standard window designs (such as angled, oriel, high level and rooflights) to justify tighter separation distances. Where tighter separation distances are used, applicants must illustrate how they have maintained a high quality of design. 3D models and daylight / sunlight studies can assist is justifying the design approach.

7.1.20 Consideration must be given the privacy of street facing windows. Often these windows become permanently obscured at the cost of the resident. Landscape and generous defensible space can help mitigate privacy issues from passers-by.

7.1.21 Ground level flats facing onto busy streets can be exposed to noise and air pollution and a lack of privacy which can have an adverse effect on wellbeing. Duplex typologies (homes across two storeys) provide better separation from the street.

7.1.22 Where possible, rooms that share similar functions should be positioned above one another to help reduce noise transmission between noisy and quiet spaces. Technical requirements for soundproofing in separating walls and floor are set out in Approved Document E of the Building Regulations.

7.1.23 The orientation and massing of backland development should ensure the privacy of existing and new residents is maintained. This can be achieved through well designed plans and window positioning.

7.1.24 When subdividing or converting existing buildings consider the location of existing windows in neighbouring houses. Avoid positioning new windows or habitable rooms that will result in overlooking neighbours or being overlooked.

Fig.7.30 - A mix of home types in a compact building, it provides duplexes at street level with flats above.
(Vaudeville Court, Islington by **Levitt Bernstein**)
[Credit: Tim Crocker]

Fig.7.31 - The front garden of this terrace home provides a well-defined defensible space made more pleasant with soft landscaping.
(Newham Housing, Newham by **Panter Hudspith**)
[Credit: Panter Hudspith]

Does your proposal provide enough private external space?

7.1.25 Outdoor spaces should be approached as an extension of the inside. It is sometimes helpful to think of outdoor spaces with particular uses, such as a providing a space to dine, to play or to sit.

7.1.26 Applicants should consider the relationship between inside and outside. A landscape architect can provide valuable input into creating high quality and effective outdoor space.

7.1.27 All proposals for new houses must provide a suitable amount of private external space. Your proposal must provide a minimum of 50m^2 of usable external or garden space. Where existing garden spaces form part or all of the development site, you must retain a minimum of 50m^2 of garden space for the host property. See Merton's Local Plan for more details

7.1.28 All proposals for flatted developments must provide a minimum of 5m^2 of usable private outdoor space for all two-person dwellings and an extra 1m^2 should be provided for each additional occupant. The required minimum width and minimum depth for all balconies and other private external spaces is 1.5m. The proportions of the space should comfortably accommodate for furniture. Plans should include furniture lay-outs on balconies.

7.1.29 Enclosing balconies as glazed, ventilated winter gardens is considered an acceptable alternative to open balconies and is recommended for all dwellings exposed to sources of significant noise or strong wind, particularly at high level. Winter gardens should be thermally separated from the interior and the floor should be drained.

Fig.7.32 - Winter garden leading unto a balcony.
(Pilgrim Gardens, Evington by **PRP Architects**).
[Credit: Tim Crocker]

Fig.7.33 - Generously sized private balconies in this estate extension allow for a variety of uses.
(Bourne Estate, Camden by **Matthew Lloyd Architects**).
[Credit: Benedict Luxmoore]

How does your proposal promote safety?

7.1.30 The design and layout of buildings is key to creating safe environments and reducing crime and disorder. ‘Secured by Design’ accreditation and its principles should inform your proposal. See Police Crime Prevention Initiative’s (PCPI) Secured By Design: Homes for more details.

7.1.31 Your proposal should position windows to habitable rooms overlooking streets and shared access routes. This will help to animate the façades of the houses and improve natural surveillance.

7.1.32 The front entrance to a home acts as a threshold that accommodates a variety of everyday activities from collecting post to storing outdoor clothing. Entrances should be well lit, sheltered and safe in order to accommodate these functions. You must ensure that all exterior lighting meets the relevant UK standards for both minimum and average luminance.

7.1.33 Where possible, incorporate mail delivery via a secure external letterbox or delivery ‘through the wall’ into a secure area to avoid crimes associated with letterboxes, such as arson and ‘fishing’ for personal items like vehicle and house keys.

7.1.34 Larger developments with a communal entrance must have an access control system able to capture images of people using the door entry panel. Additional CCTV cameras may be installed to cover communal entrances, enabling visitors to be viewed from each dwelling. Also consider the incorporation of a secure airlock in your entrance area.

Fig.7.34 - This extension to an existing terrace promotes a sense of safety by incorporating defensible space fronting the street.
(Corner House, Southwark by **31/44 Architects**)
[Credit: Rory Gardiner]

Fig.7.35 - Airlock lobbies in larger buildings provide safety to residents and reduce opportunities for intruders. The entrance to this proposal is made visible and safer by locating it on a prominent corner of the site.
(Mapleton Crescent, Wandsworth by **Metropolitan Workshop**
[Credit: Simon Kennedy]

Are you providing car parking?

7.1.35 The Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) is a measure of how well a location is connected to public transport services. PTAL is used to determine how much parking should be provided for your development. Sites with a high PTAL, typically near town centres and transport nodes, should be car free. Proposals should provide car parking in accordance with the standards set out in the London Plan.

7.1.36 In many areas in the Borough, front gardens contribute significantly to the characters of homes. Although providing parking spaces might be a practical need, paving the entire front garden can have a devaluing effect on your home and the surrounding area.

7.1.37 Creating extra parking spaces should be balanced with preserving landscaping. A landscape-led approach is encouraged where planting can be used to soften parking areas and improve biodiversity. Paved surfaces should be permeable to aid drainage. See our cross over information pack for more details.

7.1.38 The location of parking should be integrated within the overall architectural or landscape design. Large and hard paved forecourts facing onto a street are not acceptable.

7.1.39 Where gated access is required, secure access must not dominate the street elevation.

7.1.40 Car-free developments should be the starting point for proposals on sites that are (or are planned to be) well-connected by public transport. Developments elsewhere should provide the minimum necessary parking. Car-free developments should still provide parking for disabled persons.

7.1.41 Where possible your proposal should enable the charging of electric vehicles (EVs) in safe, accessible and convenient locations. All EV charging point installations should comply with IET Standards. See London Plan policy T6 for more details on the required number of EV parking spaces.

Fig.7.36 - On-street car parking integrated with good landscape design creates a positive setting and feels less car dominate.
(Abode at Great Kneighton, Cambridge by **Proctor & Matthews Architects**)
[Credit: Proctor & Matthews Architects]

Fig.7.37 - A planted shared courtyard space located on top of a carpark.
(Bennets Courtyard, Colliers Wood by **FCB Studios**)

Where are bins and bicycles stored?

7.1.42 Bin stores, bicycle parking and plant areas (storage areas) should be considered early in the design process to avoid them being poorly designed and located. They must be included in all drawings, whether the solution is inside the building or outside.

7.1.43 Proposals should provide cycle parking in accordance with the minimum standards set out in Policy T5 of the London Plan and must be designed and laid out in accordance with the guidance contained in TfL's London Cycling Design Standards.

7.1.44 Bicycle storage should be located where it is convenient and accessible from the dwelling and the street. Where you are providing communal bike store it should be lit at night and provide a good level of level of natural surveillance.

7.1.45 Bins can clutter front gardens if their storage is unconsidered. If they are stored in the front garden, they should be integrated into the landscape design of the front garden. Bins should be easy to access and roll to curbside during collection days. Make use of our Waste and Recycling Storage Requirements guidance when designing your bin store.

7.1.46 Bin stores must be located where it is convenient and accessible from the dwelling and the collection point. A drag distance of 30m for residents, and no more than 10m from the highway for waste collection is required. If bin stores are farther than the recommended drag distance, you will require private waste management.

7.1.47 Access to storage areas should be kept to a minimum on street facing elevations in order to maximise active street frontages.

7.1.48 Bicycle/bin box's in front gardens are generally supported, however you must demonstrate that is does not adversely impact on the character of the street or quality of amenity space. Careful consideration to their size and orientation must be given.

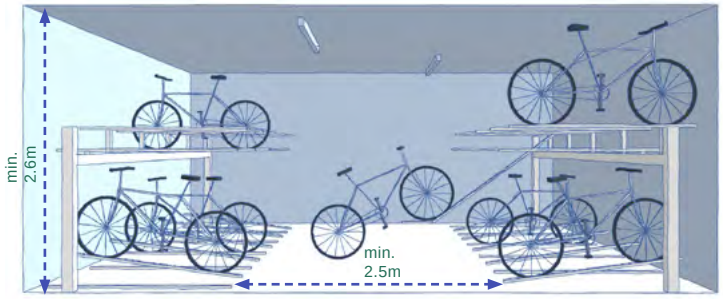


Fig.7.38 - Example of two tiered cycle parking.
A two tiered cycle storage system can be used to increase the density of cycle parking, however it is crucial spaces are designed to accommodate the circulation and head height required for this system to be easily used. There should be a minimum aisle width of 2.5m and minimum head height of 2.6m. More technical guidance can be found in TfL's London Cycling Design Standards.

Fig.7.39 - Integrated bin and bike store
Storage for bins and bikes have been integrated into the landscape design of the front gardens.
(Signal Townhouses, Greenwich by **AHMM**)

Are you proposing basement or subterranean levels?

7.1.49 There has been a growing trend in the creation of new basements and basement extensions in the borough. However basement developments are often viewed as contentious due to the disruption caused to neighbouring properties. It is strongly recommended that you inform neighbours beforehand to explain the proposed development.

7.1.50 It is strongly recommended that you appoint a design team who have experience in basement and subterranean developments including a Chartered Structural or Civil Engineer.

7.1.51 Your basement proposal must not exceed one storey. If your proposal extends beyond the outer walls of the original property (prior to any alterations), its extended footprint must be less than 50% of the original dwelling's footprint.

7.1.52 In areas at risk of flooding you should avoid including any bedrooms in subterranean levels.

7.1.53 It is expected that you provide an outline construction method statement (CMS) when submitting your planning application.

7.1.54 Proposals will require an assessment on their impacts on drainage, flooding from all sources, groundwater conditions and structural stability where appropriate.

7.1.55 More detailed information can be found in the council's Basement and Subterranean Planning Guidance.

Fig.7.40 - Generous lightwell brings natural daylight into the basement bedroom spaces of this new house.
(Pocket House, Southwark by **Tikari Works**)
[Credit: Edmund Sumner]

CHECKLIST

☐ **Are internal spaces of a functional proportion and size?**

- Well sized and proportioned rooms that go beyond the minimum standards

☐ **Have you allowed for adequate daylight and sunlight?**

- Maximising dual-aspect homes and providing good quality light

☐ **How does your proposal achieve visual and acoustic privacy?**

- Using appropriate measures to limit the developments impact

☐ **Does your proposal provide enough external space?**

- Providing high quality space that is beyond the minimum standards

☐ **How does your proposal promote safety?**

- Creating safe and welcoming environments

☐ **Are you providing car parking?**

- Using a landscape approach to design

☐ **Where are bins and bicycles stored?**

- Consider how they are integrated into the design from an early stage

☐ **Are you proposing basement or subterranean levels?**

- Creating safe spaces underground

Our Local Plan sets a target to make Merton net zero carbon by 2050. Your proposal must demonstrate consideration of reducing carbon emissions and running costs through effective layout, material choice and energy systems.

8 ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

OBJECTIVES

1. Make use of robust materials that retain their aesthetic quality.
2. Meet the challenges of rising fuel costs, flood risk and climate change.
3. Encourage biodiversity by integrating landscape and architecture.

8.1 GUIDANCE NOTES

Does your project promote biodiversity?

8.1.1 The greening of urban environments is very important for enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and general wellbeing. You must consider how your proposal will incorporate green features at an early stage.

8.1.2 Your project should avoid a net loss of green space and must provide a net gain of biodiversity. You can achieve this by planting new trees, incorporating green roofs and roof gardens, introducing green walls to provide insulation and shading, and other greening measures such as sustainable drainage systems to reduce water runoff and improve biodiversity.

8.1.3 Where appropriate you should take opportunities to use natural resources for the benefit of residents and the wider community. This can be achieved by improving access to nature through Green Infrastructure provisions.

8.1.4 Merton is committed to ensuring that new developments incorporate green infrastructure, to help create healthy places, enhance biodiversity and address the *urban heat island effect*. All major residential developments (10 or more homes) must achieve an Urban Greening Factor of 0.4. See our Local Plan Urban Greening Policy for more details.

8.1.5 You must endeavour to retain existing mature trees and vegetation on site that are not protected. A good design will endeavour to integrate existing trees into the design approach.

8.1.6 No work can be carried out on trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or trees in conservation areas protected by the provisions of section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, without the consent of the Council. Using an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, you must demonstrate that your proposal will not adversely affect surrounding trees.

Fig.8.1 - This backland development meets the principle of 'no net loss in green cover' by incorporating planers on the roof to allow for a diversity of plants and therefore an increase in biodiversity.
(Garden House by **Hayhurst and Co Architects**)
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

8.1.7 Where possible you should take the opportunity to allow for food growing such as allotments, community gardens and other innovative food growing spaces as part of your proposal.

8.1.8 You should utilise opportunities to attract new species to your site. This can include the incorporation of artificial nest boxes and bricks in buildings to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for birds, including species under threat such as swifts, house martins, swallows and house sparrows, and where appropriate, bats.

8.1.9 If your site is likely to provide a habitat for protected species it is important that environmental surveys are done at the right time using appropriate methods. You should consult with a qualified ecologist for advice.

8.1.10 Lighting should be designed and selected so that it does not adversely affect biodiversity and wildlife such as bats and birds. See the Bat Conservation Trust website for more details. All new street lighting must minimise light pollution in line with current environmental requirements.

8.1.11 If your proposal is within 20 meters of a river, high risk flood zones, groundwater source protection zones, contaminated land or close to a waste management site, then you should contact the Environment Agency (EA) for advice and guidance. See the Government's 'Developers: get environmental advice on your planning proposals' for more details.

8.1.12 You can get advice from Natural England if your proposal involves environmental opportunities to improve the site and surrounding area and / or if your proposal affects or is likely to affect:
- protected sites and areas
- protected species
- ancient woodland

Natural England's Magic Map plots the locations of the features noted above.

Fig.8.2 - Swift bricks installed at eaves-level can help to increase biodiversity on your site by providing a space roosting swifts and other bird species.
[Credit: Action for Swifts]

Fig.8.3 - The four green roofs of this backland home provides a diverse habitat for many plant and insect species in an urban environment.
(The Muse by **Bere:Architects**)
[Credit: Bere:Architects]

Have you considered how drainage will be sustainably managed?

8.1.13 In order to adapt to climate change you must maximise urban greening and increase permeable surfaces. This helps to manage flood risk through reducing surface water runoff. Paving over a front garden with impermeable surfaces to create a car parking space can harm the character of the street, reduce biodiversity and increase surface water run-off.

8.1.14 Hard-landscaped and impermeable private gardens contribute to flash-flooding in local areas. Such areas, particularly impermeable surfaces, should be kept to a minimum to allow for the maximum area of permeable surfaces, greening and planting.

8.1.15 All proposals must detail how surface water runoff and waste (foul) water arising from the proposed development will be managed sustainably through implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) techniques such as living roofs, rain gardens, retention ponds, soakaways, infiltration trenches and porous paving. See our Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) Supplementary Planning Document for more details.

8.1.16 If your proposal is within a flood risk zone you may be required to submit a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). See the Governments floor risk assessment guidance for more details.

8.1.17 Proposals involving a change of use may cause an increase in flood risk if the vulnerability classification of the development is changed (for example from commercial to residential). In such cases, you will need to show using a Flood Risk Assessment that future users of the development will not be placed in danger from flood hazards throughout its lifetime.

Fig.8.4 - Oborne Road Rain Gardens involved the local community to turn large areas of hard landscape in to gardens that absorb excess rainfall and appeal to wildlife.
(**Elaine Hughes Landscape Design**)
[Credit: London Gov.]

Fig.8.5 - Previously a road heavily used for children drop-off, Bridget Joyce Square, London, integrates sustainable drainage and play in the public realm.
[Credit: London Wildlife Trust]

Are your chosen materials fit for purpose?

8.1.18 In order to ensure high levels of energy efficiency, the use of energy-saving materials and features should be maximised. Good quality windows and high performance insulation can reduce your home's energy consumption. This may mean a higher initial outlay but significant long-term savings.

8.1.19 Selecting robust materials with a long life span helps reduce the need for frequent maintenance. Consequently, this will reduce life-time maintenance costs and carbon emissions. Avoid high-maintenance materials such as smooth render which is easily stained and discoloured.

8.1.20 You must consider from an early stage how to minimise or eliminate the need for scaffolding to allow maintenance and cleaning. You should provide easy and safe access to allow for cleaning and servicing. See Construction Design and Management Regulations for more details.

8.1.21 Buildings over 18m above ground level must comply with requirements to control the external spread of flames. This may affect the facade treatment of your proposal. In conversion projects you may need to make additional provisions to extend or supplement fire-fighting installations. See Approved Document B of the Building Regulations for more details.

8.1.22 The source of building materials in your project have a measurable carbon footprint. Sourcing materials locally may help to reduce the carbon footprint of the project by cutting carbon emissions.

8.1.23 To promote a circular economy consider reusing materials and buildings where possible. Consider materials engineered for thermal, structural and fire performance with low embodied carbon such as cross-laminated timber.

8.1.24 Consider using Modern Methods of Construction as a way to speed up the building process, increase building quality and avoid costly work on site.

Fig.8.6 - New-build house references the terracotta brickwork as well as the Victorian tiling to front entrances of the neighbouring terrace homes. (Lucien road by **Harp & Harp Architects**)
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]

Fig.8.7 - This ground-breaking use of cross-laminated timber technology significantly reduced the carbon footprint of the building in terms of the amount of material used and energy consumption.
(Dalston Works by **Waugh Thistleton Architects)**
[Credit: Waugh Thistleton Architects]

Have you considered the energy consumption of your project?

8.1.25 The energy efficiency of a project may be greatly affected by its orientation on site. Large areas of glazing north-facing will bring in even light but south-facing glazing might result in overheating if no shading is provided. Overheating may be a major problem for single aspect homes and are discouraged. See our Explanatory Note: Approaches to Sustainable Design and Construction and Good Homes Alliance's Overheating in New Homes for more details.

8.1.26 All proposals for new dwellings must include a Sustainability Statement within the Design & Access Statement, or a standalone statement (depending on the size of the development). You must also include an energy assessment that details how the proposal will comply with Merton's Local Plan and the policies outlined in Chapter 9 of the London Plan 2021.

8.1.27 Energy can be collected from renewable sources such as sunlight, wind and geothermal heat. The use of renewable energy can increase the energy efficiency of a home and reduce energy bills.

8.1.28 On sites where it may be difficult to implement renewable sources of energy such as solar and wind, you should consider other sources of energy such as ground and air source heat pumps.

8.1.29 All proposals, including refurbishments, must demonstrate the effective use of resources and materials to minimise water use and CO_2 emissions.

8.1.30 You should endeavour to future-proof your development by aiming for operation at net-zero carbon to minimise the need for retroactive improvements. Use LETI's Climate Emergency Design Guide when designing.

8.1.31 We strongly encourage design teams to achieve Passivhaus standards. More guidance can be found at the Passivhaus Trust website.

Fig.8.8 - Passive house in Camden on a challenging mews site features a number of active and passive systems to reduce CO2 emissions and increase biodiversity.
(Camden Passivehaus by **Bere:Architects**)
[Credit: Bere:Architects]

Fig.8.9 - Overhanging roof works in harmony with the energy strategy of this passivhaus by providing summer shading to the large areas of glazing positioned to the south-east.
(Dundon Passivhaus by **Prewett Bizley Architects**)
[Credit: Passivehaus Trust / Prewett Bizley Architects]

CHECKLIST

☐ **Does you project promote biodiversity?**

- Enhancing biodiversity
- Working with existing trees and vegetation
- Protecting wildlife
-

☐ **Have you considered how drainage will be sustainably managed?**

- Soft landscape and permeable materials
- Sustainable Drainage Systems

☐ **Are your chosen materials fit for purpose?**

- Appropriate and high quality materials
- Consider re-use of materials and buildings

☐ **Have you considered the energy consumption of your project?**

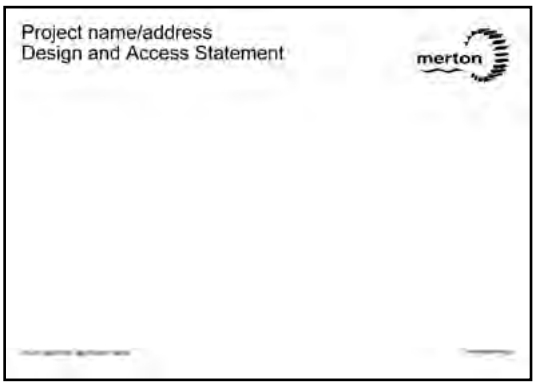
- Renewable sources of energy
- Avoiding overheating with good design

This document forms part of the Small Sites Toolkit SPD. Please see other tools to assist you with the design of your development.

01. Design Guidance
A sequence of questions and recommendations to guide you when designing your project. Merton Council will use these guidance notes to appraise your project during the planning process.

02. Case Studies
A selection of relevant case studies illustrating exemplar developments that have been delivered on small sites. Using thoughtful solutions the designers of these projects have successfully overcome some of the obstacles a small site development may encounter.

03. Design and Access Statement Template
As part of your planning application, you must produce a Design and Access Statement (DAS). A DAS will help explain and justify your proposal. The template has a checklist of necessary information to include with your application to make sure Merton Council can accurately appraise you project.



GLOSSARY AND LIBRARY

A

Active Travel (or active transport)

The transport of people or goods, through non-motorized means, based around human physical activity

Air Quality Assessment (AQA)

A report to determine whether a particular site is suitable for residential development and whether the development is likely to result in a deterioration of local air quality.

Amenity

Elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

A survey and assessment of how a proposed development and its associated trees will co-exist and interact in the present and future.

Article 4 Direction

An order made by a local planning authority to remove certain permitted development rights in all, or part of, its area.

Average Daylight Factor (ADF)

A calculation to estimate the amount of light that will reach occupants inside a building.

B

Biodiversity

The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

Building Control

A statutory process involving an independent third party assessment to make sure that building work complies with the Building Regulations through the process of checking plans and site inspections.

Building Regulations

A set of standards for the design and construction of buildings to ensure the safety and health for people in or about those buildings.

C

Character

A term relating to Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings, but also to the appearance of any rural or urban location in terms of its landscape or the layout of streets and open spaces, giving places their distinct identity.

Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM)

Regulations governing the way construction projects of all sizes and types are planned in the UK

Code for Sustainable Homes

A new national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes launched in December 2006.

Community Infrastructure Levy

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Conservation Area

Any area of special architectural or historic interest designated by the Local Authority.

Covenant

A formal agreement between two or more parties to do something or to refrain from doing something, normally building work.

Co-housing

Housing consisting of a cluster of private homes and shared community spaces and functions created and managed by residents.

D

Delegated Powers

A power conferred to designated planning officers by locally elected councillors so that the officers may take decisions on specified planning matters on behalf of the council.

Design Review Panel (DRP)

A panel that advises us on design issues relating to new development schemes and proposals for public spaces, including major planning applications and pre-application development proposals.

E

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

Easement

A right which a person has over land owned by someone else.

F

Flood Risk Assessment

An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

Full Application

A planning application seeking full permission for a development proposal, with no matters reserved for later approval.

G

Green Infrastructure

A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Gross Internal Area (GIA)

The area of a building measured to the internal face of the perimeter walls at each floor level.

Gross External Area (GEA)

The area of a building measured externally at each floor level.

H

Habitable Room

Defined under Part M of the Building Regulations: “a room used, or intended to be used, for dwelling purposes including a kitchen but not a bathroom or utility room.”

Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

A process that identifies the health and wellbeing impacts (benefits and harms) of any plan or development project.

Heritage Statement (Heritage Impact Assessment)

A document that assesses the significance of heritage assets and/or their settings affected by a development, and of the impacts of that development upon them.

Heritage Asset

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.

Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)

A property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 ‘household’ (for example a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen.

L

Listed Building

A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest.

Listed Building Consent

Consent required for the demolition, in whole or in part of a listed building, or for any works of alteration or extension that would affect the character of the building.

Local Listing (or Building of Local Importance)

Locally important building valued for contribution to local scene or for local historical situations.

Local Plan

A plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the community.

Local Planning Authority

A public authority that carries out specific planning functions for a particular area.

London Plan

Sets out the economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the future development of London.

Luminance

The apparent brightness, how bright an object appears to the human eye.

M

Massing

Refers to the perception of the general shape and form as well as size of a building.

Metropolitan Open Land

Land intended to be protected as an area of landscape, recreation, nature conservation or scientific interest.

Mixed use (or mixed use development)

Provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as residential, community and leisure uses, on a site or within a particular area.

Modern Methods of Construction

A range of off-site manufacturing and on-site construction techniques that benefit from factory conditions and mass production.

Multi-generational Dwelling

Homes consisting of at least two adult generations living under the same roof.

N

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England.

Natural Surveillance (or passive surveillance)

The discouragement to wrongdoing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen out of surrounding windows.

Net Internal Area (NIA)

Net Internal Area is the usable area within a building measured to the internal face of the perimeter walls at each floor level

Net Zero Carbon (Carbon Neutral) Building

A building that is highly energy efficient and fully powered from on-site and/or off-site renewable energy sources.

Noise Impact Assessment

An evaluation of the effect of noise, which will arise as a result of the proposed development.

O

Outline application

A general application for planning permission to establish that a development is acceptable in principle, subject to subsequent approval of detailed matters.

Overbearing

A term describing the impact of a development or building on its surroundings, particularly a neighbouring property, in terms of its scale, massing and general dominating effect.

Overlooking

A term describing the effect when a development or building affords an outlook over adjoining land or property, often causing loss of privacy.

Overshadowing

The effect of a development or building on the amount of natural light presently enjoyed by a neighbouring property, resulting in a shadow being cast over that neighbouring property.

P

Party Wall

Party walls stand on the land of 2 or more owners and either form part of a building or don't form part of a building, such as a garden wall (not wooden fences).

Party Wall Agreement

A legal agreement made between neighbours regarding any building work that affects a party wall or boundary.

Permitted Development (or Permitted Development Rights)

Permission to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application to a local planning authority, as granted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order.

Planning Applications Committee

A meeting where elected councillors assemble to decide whether planning applications should be approved or rejected and whether approved applications should have planning conditions or planning obligations attached to them.

Planning Condition

Requirements attached to a planning permission to limit, control or direct the manner in which a development is carried out.

Planning Inspectorate

A body of professionals responsible for processing planning and enforcement appeals and community infrastructure levy charging schedules amongst other responsibilities.

Planning Obligation (or "Section 106" Agreement)

A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act, between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

Prior Notification (or Prior Approval)

Prior notification is a procedure whereby a developer must notify the planning authority of proposals before exercising permitted development rights

Public Realm

Those parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) available, for everyone to use, including streets, squares and parks.

Public Right of Way

A highway over which the public have a right of access along the route.

R

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment used for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity – from the wind, the sun and geothermal heat.

S

Site Area

The total area of the site within the site title boundaries, measured on a horizontal plane.

Site Area Gross

The Site Area plus any area of adjoining roads, enclosed by extending the boundaries of the site up to the centre of the road, or 6m out from the frontage, whichever is less.

Site Area Net

The land that is available for development.

Streetscape

The general appearance and visual character of a street that results from its constituent buildings, features and form.

Sui-Generis

A term given to the uses of land or buildings, not falling into any of the use classes identified by the Use Classes Order, for example theatres, launderettes, car showrooms and filling stations.

Supplementary Planing Guidance (SPG)

Supplementary Planning Guidance may cover a range of issues, both thematic and site specific and provide further detail of policies and proposals in a development plan.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) (or Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems)

A collection of water management practices of drainage in and around a developments by allowing natural processes to break down pollutants in rainfall.

Sustainability Statement

A report that covers all aspects of the environmental impact of a planned development.

T

Terracing Effect

A term used to describe the closing of gaps between houses by extending the houses sideways, for example a double garage between semi-detached properties.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

A mechanism for securing the preservation of single or groups of trees of acknowledged amenity value.

Transport Network

A structure that permits vehicular movement include but are not limited to road networks, railways, air routes, pipelines, aqueducts

Townscape

The landscape within a built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces.

Townscape Study (or Townscape Character Assessment)

A study to identify the architectural and spatial features within a settlement that contribute to the quality of visual experience.

U

Use Classes Order

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories.

Urban Greening

Public landscaping projects that create mutually beneficial relationships between city dwellers and their environments.

Urban Heat Island Effect

An environmental problem occurring in metropolitan areas in which the air temperature is significantly higher than in suburban areas due to human activities.

W

Wayfinding

The use of spatial and environmental cues to guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space..

LIBRARY

London

London Plan

London Plan Guidance and Supplementary Planning Guidance

Merton Council

Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Character Study SPD

Shop Front Guidance SPD

Basement and Subterranean Planning Guidance SPD

Sustainable Drainage SPD

Conservation and Character Appraisals

Climate Strategy and Action Plan

Pre Application Service

Crossover Information Pack

Waste and Recycling Storage Requirements

Explanatory Note on Approaches to Sustainable Design and Construction

Transport for London

Healthy Streets for London

Walking Action Plan

Cycling Action Plan

Streets Toolkit

Other

Planning Portal

Building Regulations Approved Documents

Party Wall and Building Works Guidance

Air Quality Action Plan

Historic England's Good Practice Advice

Police Crime Prevention Initiative's Secured By Design: Homes

Natural England's Magic Map

Passivhaus Trust's Guidance

LETI's Climate Emergency Design Guide

MERTON COUNCIL

FUTURE MERTON

Merton Civic Centre, London Rd, Morden SM4 5DX

MERTON COUNCIL
FUTURE MERTON

SMALL SITES TOOLKIT

02. CASE STUDIES

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

There are many good contemporary examples of buildings on small sites. The best approaches to small sites harness their unique character in delivering high quality homes. This chapter highlights good examples of residential projects on small sites.

5 CASE STUDIES

5.0 WHAT IS IT?

The case studies in this section illustrate best practice guidance in a range of building types and site conditions.

Case studies have been chosen to highlight exemplary delivery of specific good design principles and guidance points. It should be noted however that no case study is exemplary in all respects and each case study may well under-perform against other criteria.

The format of the case study allows comparison across types and projects - each has a short description in relation to the typology, a table of key project data, a typical floor plan showing the arrangement of dwellings and circulation, and photographs.

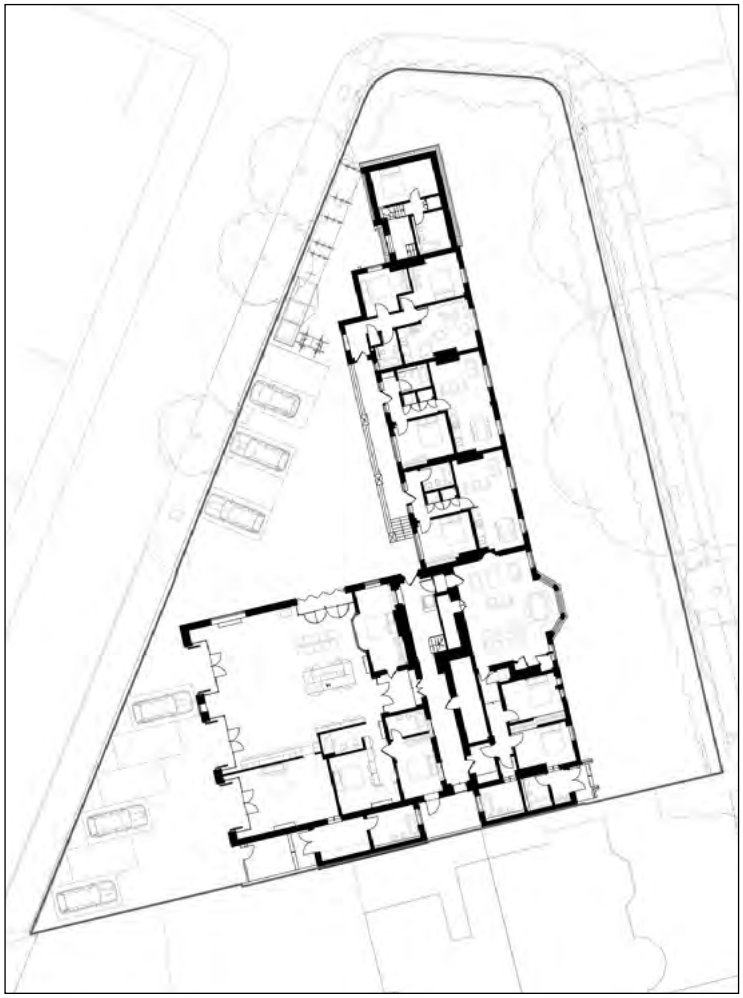
The following pages provide case studies for each small site type.

- **Existing buildings:** remodelling and adapting an existing building.
- **Rooftop sites:** upward extension development on existing buildings.
- **Street facing sites:** developments that directly addresses a street
- **Backland sites:** developments that indirectly address a street, commonly to the rear of buildings.

EXISTING BUILDING

BELSIZE PARK FIREHOUSE

Belsize Park Firehouse creates new homes from an outstanding Grade II* listed former fire station at the heart of Belsize Park. This renovation creates 20 one, two and four bedroom apartments within the existing fabric, while preserving original features of the Arts and Crafts architecture.



Project Information
Architect: Tate Harmer
Client: Platinum Land
Borough: Camden
Address: 36 Lancaster Grove, London, NW3 4PB
Completion date: August 2020
Current PTAL: 3

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 96
Parking numbers: N/A

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 14
2-bed: 5
4-bed: 1
Total: 20
Maximum height above ground level (m): -
Maximum number of storeys: 4

Tenure
Affordable: 10%
Market sale: 90%

Planning use split
Residential: 1542 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.1 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.2 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN CAMDEN

Substantial improvements to the building fabric have increased thermal performance while retaining the fire station's original elements such as timber frames and panelling, glazed bricks, fireman poles and double-height spaces of former engine bays.

Fig.5.3 - Former engine bays converted into living space.
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

A fabric-first approach to sustainability has meant that improvements have been made to the building without impacting its heritage fabric. Improvements include insulation to the roof, basement floor and external walls, along with airtightness of the doors and windows. A communal heating system for the apartments, accessed by buttons in each flat, cuts down carbon emissions and helps keep fuel bills for occupants low.

Fig.5.4- Existing fire-fighter accommodation converted into flats.
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

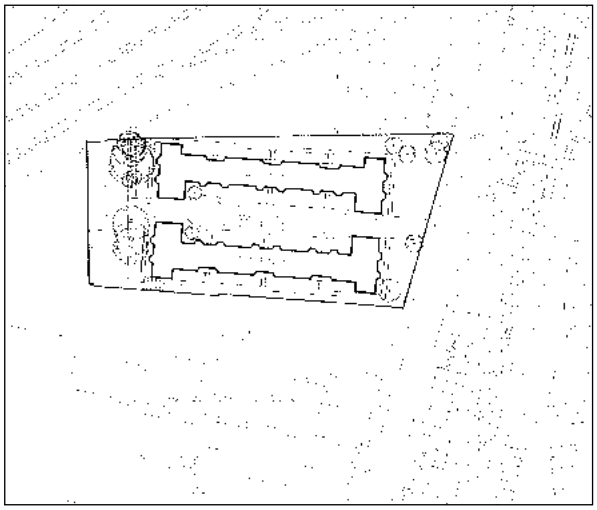
Each apartment has a dual aspect for cross-ventilation, with south-facing open plan living areas to make the most of the sunlight during the day.

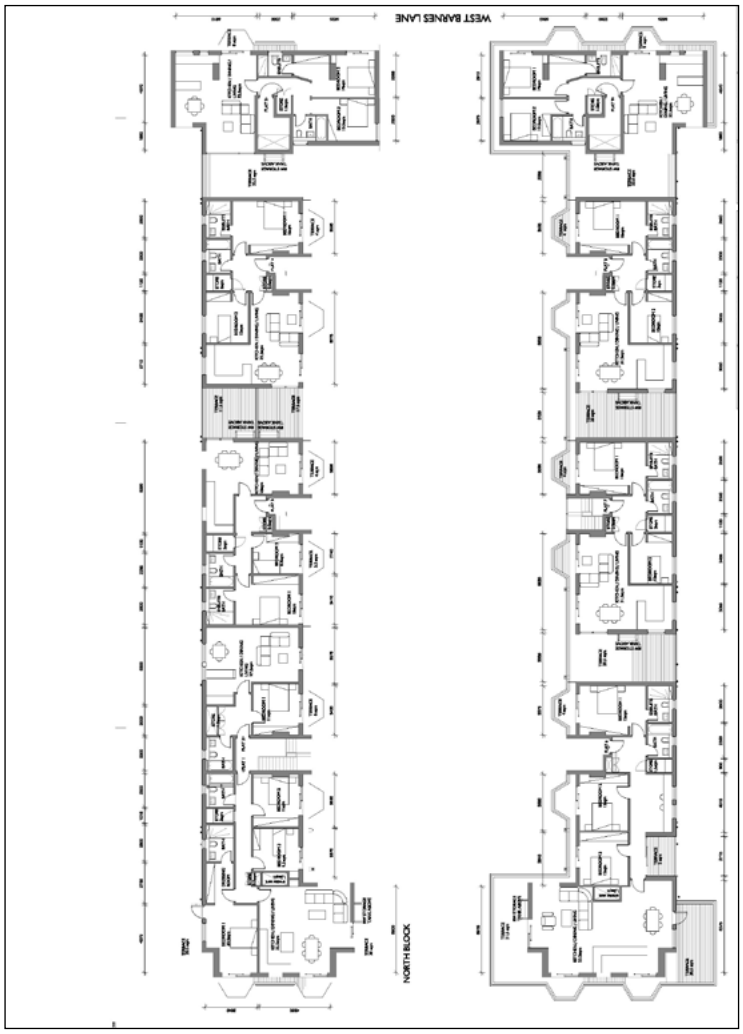
Fig.5.5 - Sensitive restoration of existing Grade II* fabric.
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

ROOFTOP SITE

MALDEN COURT

The identical pair of buildings date back to the 1930s and are located on either side of a private road which bisects the site in two equal halves. The existing three storey, flat roofed blocks placed broadly perpendicular to the main road were extended to create 9 new flats on the existing roof.





Project Information
Architect: Paul Murphy Architects
Client: Broadhaven Estates
Borough: Merton
Address: Malden Court, West Barnes Lane, London. KT3 4PW
Completion date: 2012
Current PTAL: 3

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 4173
Site area gross (sqm): 4550
Parking numbers: 12 cycle spaces

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 1
2-bed: 6
3-bed: 2
Total: 9
Maximum height above ground level (m): 8.2
Maximum number of storeys: 4

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 813 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.6 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.7 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN MERTON

The insertion of the new flats left the existing untouched with no additional works to the existing interior or exterior of the blocks. The new apartments are single storey in height featuring a curved roof, with façades articulated with alternated sections of glazing and solid wall panels. The façades to the main road and internal courtyard and 'rear' elevations are set back from the existing parapet. The articulated roof-form ensures that the mass of the existing buildings remains legible and uncompromised by the new addition.

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

The rooftop extension minimised structural works to the existing building and disruption to the existing residents during construction through the adoption of off-site prefabrication. This manufacturing approach had the added benefit of achieving Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The extension allow for harvesting of 50% of the rainwater runoff for recycling within the new flats.

Fig.5.8 - View to the main entrance of Malden Court.
[Credit: Paul Murphy Architects]

Fig.5.9 - Full height glazed doors leading on to balconies, which will minimise the need for artificial lighting.
[Credit: Paul Murphy Architects]

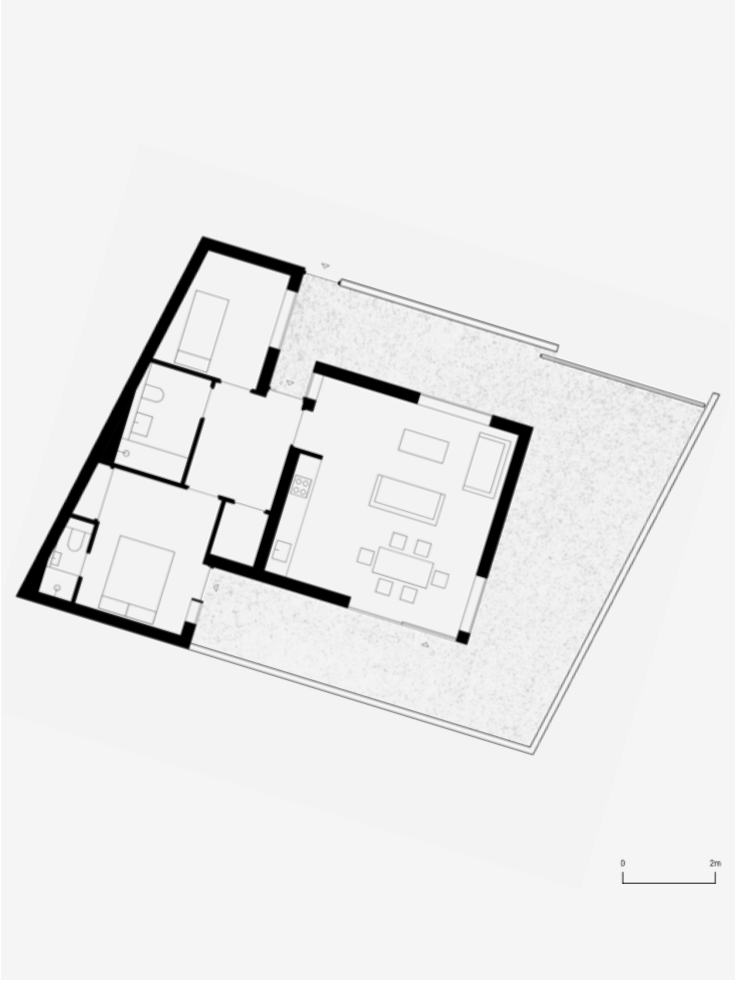
Fig.5.10 - View across private road within the site boundary of the property.
[Credit: Paul Murphy Architects]

BACKLAND

NINETEENTH ROAD

A two-bedroom house in the former garden of a semidetached house in Croydon. The site takes advantage of a side road which cuts between terraces, lined with hedge rows and garden fences. The house is designed to avoid overlooking to and from neighbouring houses. Rooms face onto internal gardens and the central living area is also naturally lit from above at the apex of a pitched roof.

The use of blue engineering brick and zinc creates a uniformed grey palate in harmony with sheds and outbuildings, contrasting the immediate buff and red brick houses. The house is intended to be subservient, nestling into its suburban back-garden context. At a time for much needed housing, the project shows the potential of creative design on plots that are often overlooked.



Project Information
Architect: Decent Goodfellow Architects
Client: Hexagon Property Developments Ltd
Borough: Merton
Address: 1 Nineteenth Road
Completion date: 2019
Current PTAL: N/A

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 165
Site area gross (sqm): 80
Parking numbers: 1

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1 x 2-bed
Maximum height above ground level (m): 5.4
Maximum number of storeys: 1

Tenure
Social rent

Fig.5.11 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.12 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN MERTON

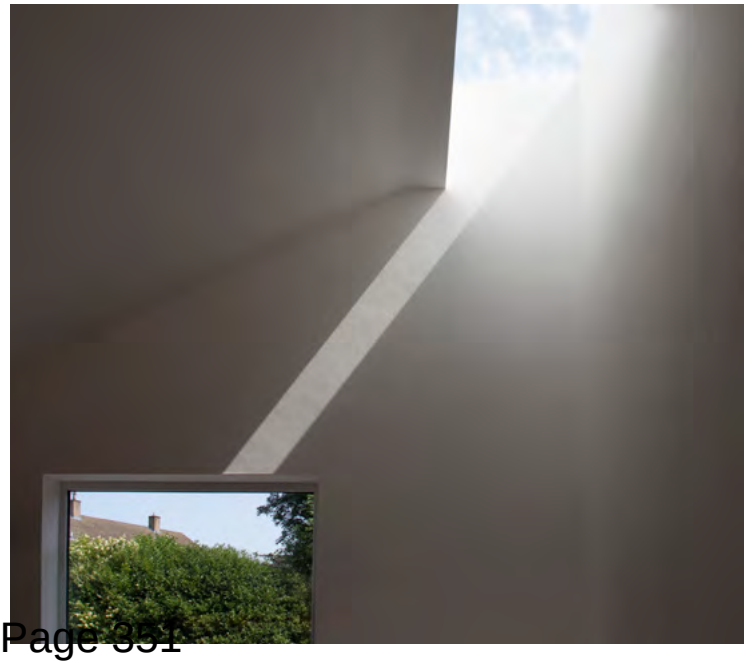
Located in a former garden, the massing is subservient to it's neighbours, reflecting the language of sheds and outbuildings often found in rear gardens.

The simple and paired back material pallet creates a clear aesthetic that does not dominate the street scene.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The spatial arrangement of the bungalow has been well considered. It protects the privacy of it's neighbours by providing windows that face only into it's courtyard amenity. The stepped form creates a triple aspect open plan kitchen / living / dining with a connection with outside space.

The massing is kept at it's lowest towards the host property and steps up with an apex roof form away from the host property. This subservient massing does not overly dominate the garden, and is remains hidden from the primary road.



ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

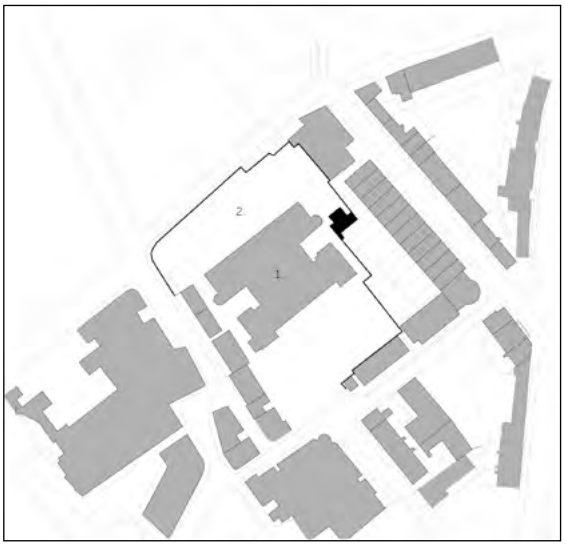
Even though the proposal is a single storey, the flat roof hosts a series of photovoltaic panels providing the home with renewal energy.

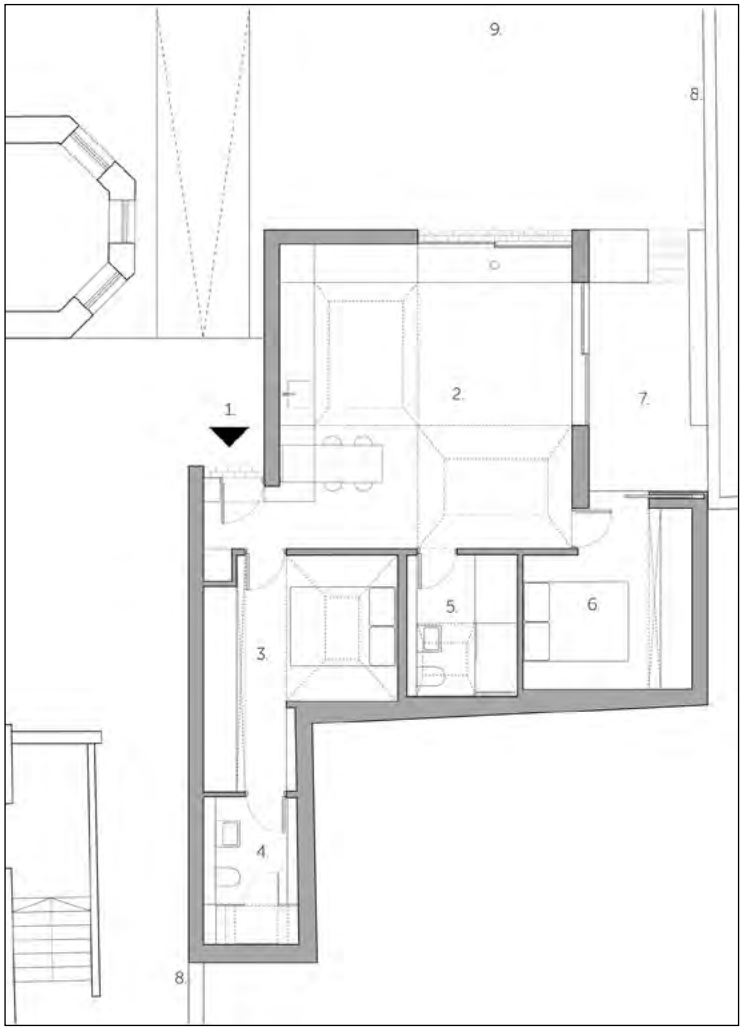
The external walls are constructed with blue engineering brick which is an affordable and robust material that

BACKLAND

HIDDEN HOUSE

The house is located in a conservation area next to a Grade II listed former Victorian school on a site previously occupied by a caretaker's shed. The design carefully creates a space for the new residential dwelling on a site defined by the proximity of a tall perimeter brick wall.





Project Information
Architect: Coffey Architects
Client: Private
Borough: Islington
Address: Kingsway Place, Sans Walk, London, EC1 0LU
Completion date: December 2016
Current PTAL: 6b

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 96
Parking numbers: N/A

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
Maximum height above ground level (m): 3
Maximum number of storeys: 1

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 72 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.16 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.17 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

FIT FOR PURPOSE

As the site was bounded on two sides by neighbouring gardens, height constraints were critical to avoid overshadowing. It was determined that the house could not be more than a single storey in height. This nonetheless delivers good indoor and outdoor space with a shared garden at the west and a private patio to the north.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Infill development on small sites can help diversify a neighbourhood and improve the mix of uses and accommodation. This house sits alongside an office complex and has been planned with an independent entrance so that security can be managed at different hours. Carefully placed windows and roof lights ensure the privacy of the house is not compromised by the adjacent uses, which is often a concern when combining different uses close together.

Fig.5.18 - View from living room and kitchen space
[Credit: Tim Soar]

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

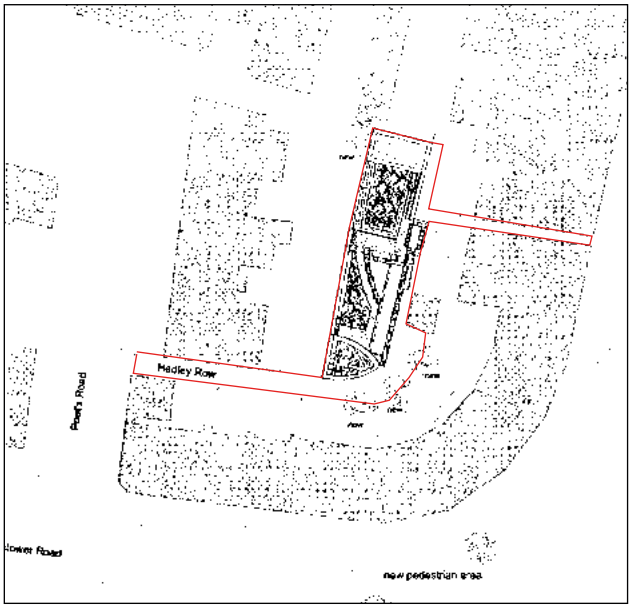
Generous roof lights help bring light into the house and compensate for the limited opportunities for windows within the façades. As the house is north-facing, the roof lights are critical for bringing sunlight into the house. They have been carefully positioned so that interior spaces cannot be seen from above by nearby residents or from adjacent offices.

Fig.5.19 - View to new home across shared access.
[Credit: Tim Soar]

BACKLAND

THE MUSE

The Muse is an award winning family home in north London, built close to Passivhaus standards. It was also built as a wildlife sanctuary and an oasis for neighbouring taller buildings to look down upon.



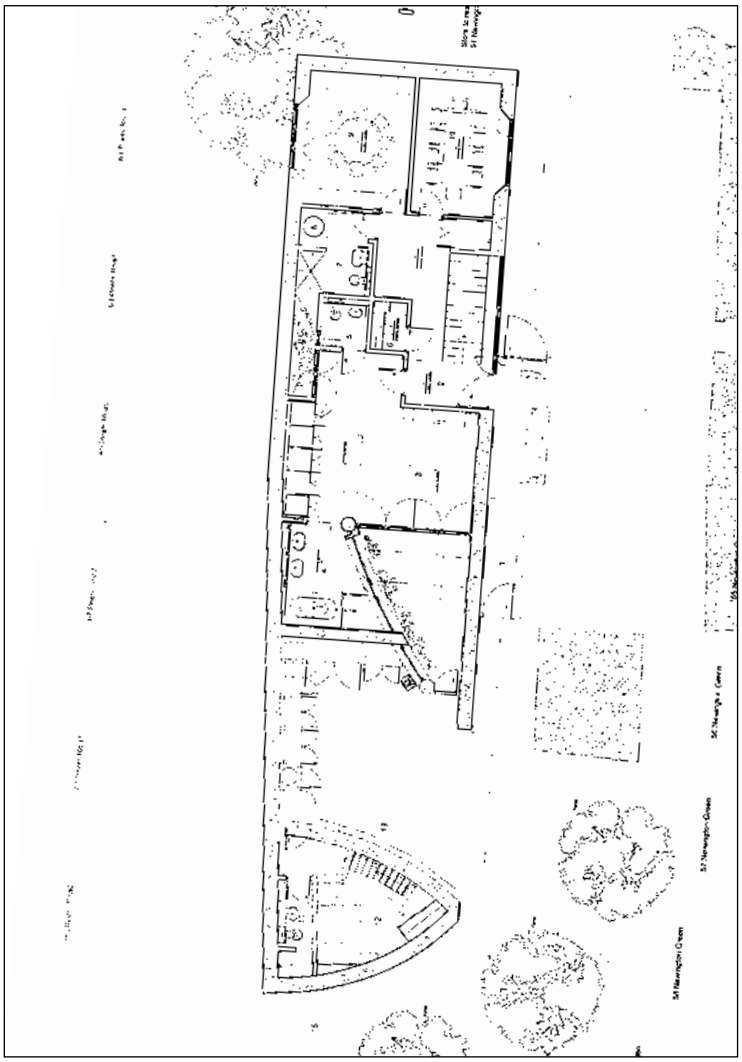


Fig.5.20 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.21 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

Project Information
Architect: Bere Architects
Client: Justin Bere
Borough: Islington
Address:
Completion date: March 2018
Current PTAL: 4

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): n/a
Parking numbers: 0

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
Maximum height above ground level (m): 5.5
Maximum number of storeys: 2 (plus basement)

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 192 sqm (GIA)

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

The Muse is located immediately behind a terrace of four Grade 1 listed heritage houses, with four green roofs forming a garden. The varying soil depths of the green roofs allow for native ecological habitats which include two wild flower meadows with a thriving bee colony, a hazel coppice and a hawthorn thicket. The roofs generously allow residents in the neighbouring buildings to watch wildlife and the changing seasons.

Despite its restricted backland site, the architects designed the internal layout of the house to maximise light and ventilation to reduce the carbon footprint and running costs of the building. The building envelope opens towards the South to maximise solar gain. All living areas including the office, kitchen and living room are located on the upper floors and the bedrooms and bathrooms are located in the ground floor to minimise artificial lighting. Natural cross and stack ventilation is encouraged with tilting windows, which also provide a secure means of night ventilation.

Fig.5.22 - View to rooftop gardens and neighbouring properties beyond. [Credit: Bere:Architects]

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

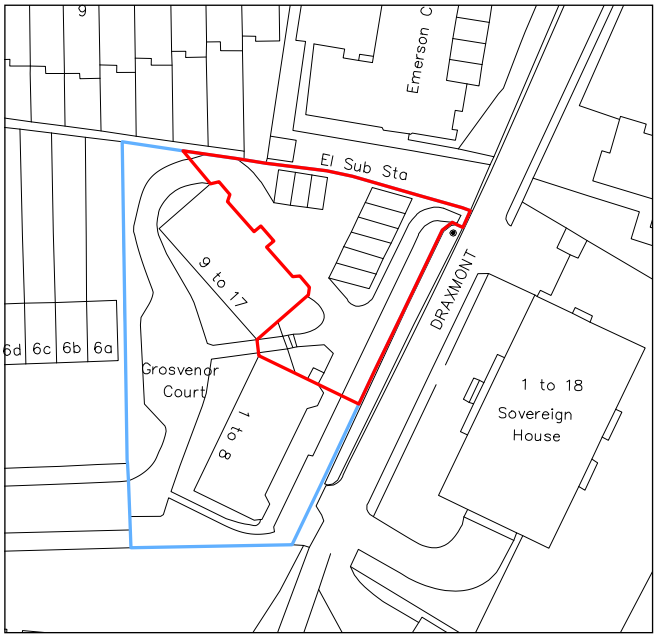
The building has been intelligently planned to protect the privacy of neighbouring homes even though it is in close proximity. It has also been designed to also improve the quality of the neighbouring homes outlook, providing a green oasis for them to look down onto.

Fig.5.23 - Large areas of glazing to the living space control views to avoid overlooking or being overlooked.
[Credit: Bere:Architects]

BACKLAND

GROSVENOR COURT

Grosvenor Court is located in a sensitive backland site behind a 1920's housing estate. Previously 9 dilapidated garages, the proposal delivers 10 garages with a 2 bedroom home above. The heavily constrained triangular site is located in the Wimbledon West Conservation Area.



Project Information
Architect: Hale Brown / Simon Brown Architects
Client: Private
Borough: Merton
Address: Grosvenor Court, Grosvenor Hill, London, SW19 4RX
Completion date: 2019/20
Current PTAL: 6a

Site characteristics
Site area net (m2): 550 (incl. communal area)
Parking numbers: 1 + 9 for existing residents

Building characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
Maximum height above ground level (m): 7
Maximum number of storeys: 2

Tenure
Market sale

Planning use split
Garages: 180 sqm
Residential: 87 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.24 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.25 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN MERTON

Located in the West Wimbledon Conservation Area, this triangular site nestled amongst taller developments is highly constrained. Despite the visual contrast with the surrounding buildings, its well thought out form and massing does not feel overbearing on the site. A well-considered material pallet of vertical cedar timber cladding helps blend the mass of the building into the surrounding mature trees.

Beyond the building itself, the scheme provides an improved pedestrian route through the site with better landscape and lighting, making it safer to walk through the site.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The project replaces 9 garages with 10 better dimensioned garages. It also provides an improved communal refuse store and better pedestrian access across the site with better landscape and lighting.

Overlooking has been reduced through well designed louvres to prevent oblique overlooking to neighbouring homes.

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

An extensive green roof on both roof levels has improved the biodiversity of the site, that originally was heavily tarmacked.

Fig.5.26 - Home above garages
[Credit: Future Merton]

Fig.5.27 - Extensive green roof and improved pedestrian and vehicle space.
[Credit: Future Merton]

BACKLAND

MORAY MEWS

Moray Mews is a terrace of eight courtyard houses within the middle of a Victorian urban block. With potential privacy, daylight and overshadowing constraints, the massing of the proposal needed to be particularly contextually sensitive and responsive. Half of the site had previously included a two-storey dilapidated are house, enabling two-storey houses to be reintroduced in this location with no increased impact on neighbouring homes. The other homes in the new terrace are sunken with sloped roofs so that they do not impact on neighbours to the north who previously had views of an empty site.

Fig.5.28 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.29 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

Project Information
Architect: Peter Barber Architects
Client: Roberto Carovona
Borough: Islington
Address: 2a-9 Moray Mews, London, N7 7DY
Completion date: Spring 2017
Current PTAL: 6a

Site characteristics
Site area net (m2): 1,040
Site area gross (m2): 1,040
Parking numbers: 1

Building characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 7
3-bed: 1
Total: 8
Maximum height above ground level (m): 7
Maximum number of storeys: 2

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 848 sqm (GIA)

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The scheme has cleverly managed issues of privacy, aspect and daylight through use of an L-shaped plan, which ensures that each dwelling looks onto its own amenity space at first floor. The rear façades are close enough to neighbouring homes to create privacy issues in all directions. In response, every room in the new development has a sideways primary aspect into the private courtyard or roof terrace to protect neighbours from overlooking. Oriel windows offer views up and down the mews with clear glass to the sides and opaque glass to the face to protect the privacy of existing buildings opposite. Trellises are used to screen views from roof terraces.

BETTER STREETS

The shallow plan of the dwellings optimises light from multiple angles into the home, despite the compact arrangement. The oriel windows located at the upper levels provide added light whilst creating architectural interest, and provide good natural surveillance of the mews street.

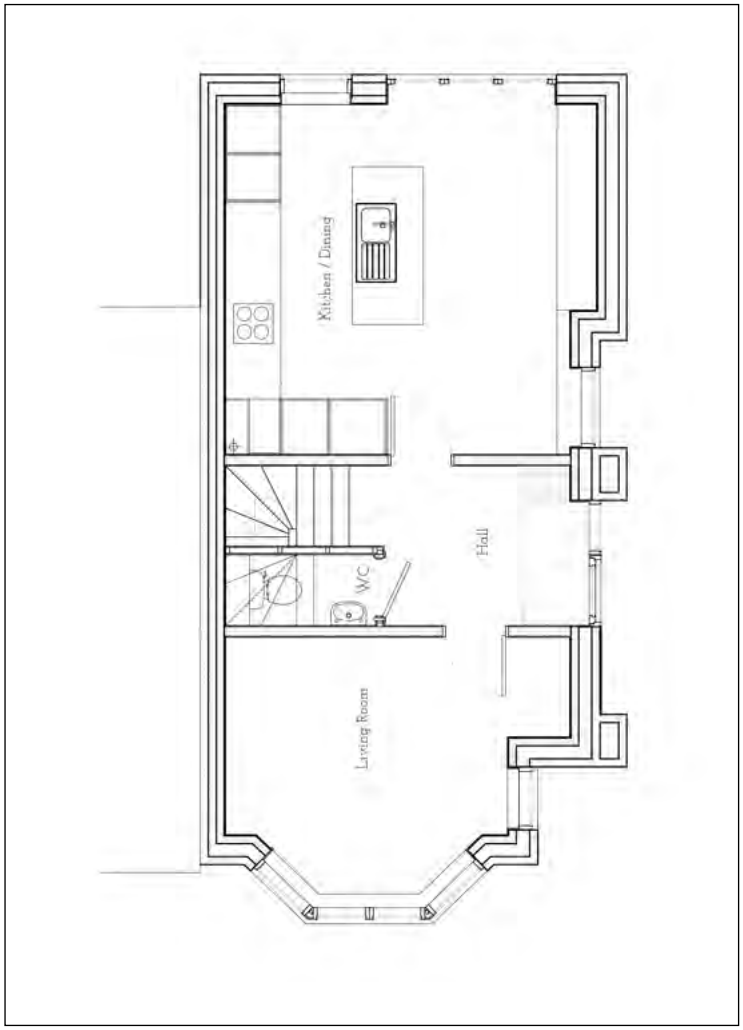
Fig.5.30 - View to entrance of new mews home.
[Credit: Morley Von Sternberg]

Fig.5.31 - View across development.
[Credit: Morley Von Sternberg]

STREET-FACING

LUCIEN ROAD

The site of this 3-storey 2-bed house sits at the end of a terrace and that was occupied by a detached single storey garage belonging to the neighbouring property. The new house shares a party wall with 32 Mount Road and references features of the 1920/30's houses in the area,



Project Information
Architect: Harp & Harp Ltd
Client: Private
Borough: Merton
Address: 43 Lucien Road, London, SW19 8EL
Completion date: February 2020
Current PTAL: 3

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 173
Site area gross (sqm): 173
Parking numbers: 1

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
Total: 1
Maximum height above ground level (m): 8
Maximum number of storeys: 3

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 90 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.32 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.33 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN MERTON

The house sits within an established context and was designed to reference both the 1930s arts and crafts terrace to which it is attached and the more formal Edwardian houses opposite whilst also being unmistakably contemporary. Details such as the white and black tiles around the entrance echo the tiled paths of its neighbours and break up the brick and render and create visual interest appropriate for the prominent corner site.

Fig.5.34 - View of house in context.
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]

MADE IN MERTON

Clear steps have also been taken to make the new house address its corner position and frontage to both Mount and Lucien Road. The front door to the new house is placed on the side (Lucien Road) frontage to allow the building to turn the corner and properly address is context as well as creating an efficient layout internally.

Fig.5.35 - Decorative tiles referencing Victorian floor tiles.
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

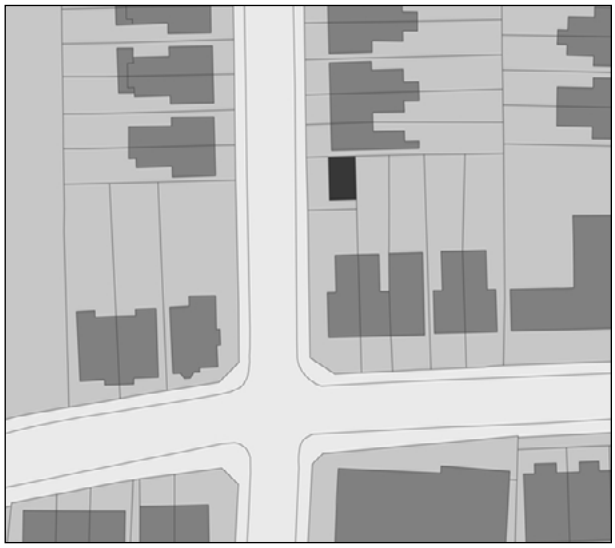
The buildings massing breaks down to create a smaller more domestically scaled gable end with a large amount of fenestration giving the gable an active frontage to Lucien Road. The appropriately scaled massing avoids an overbearing appearance on the prominent corner site.

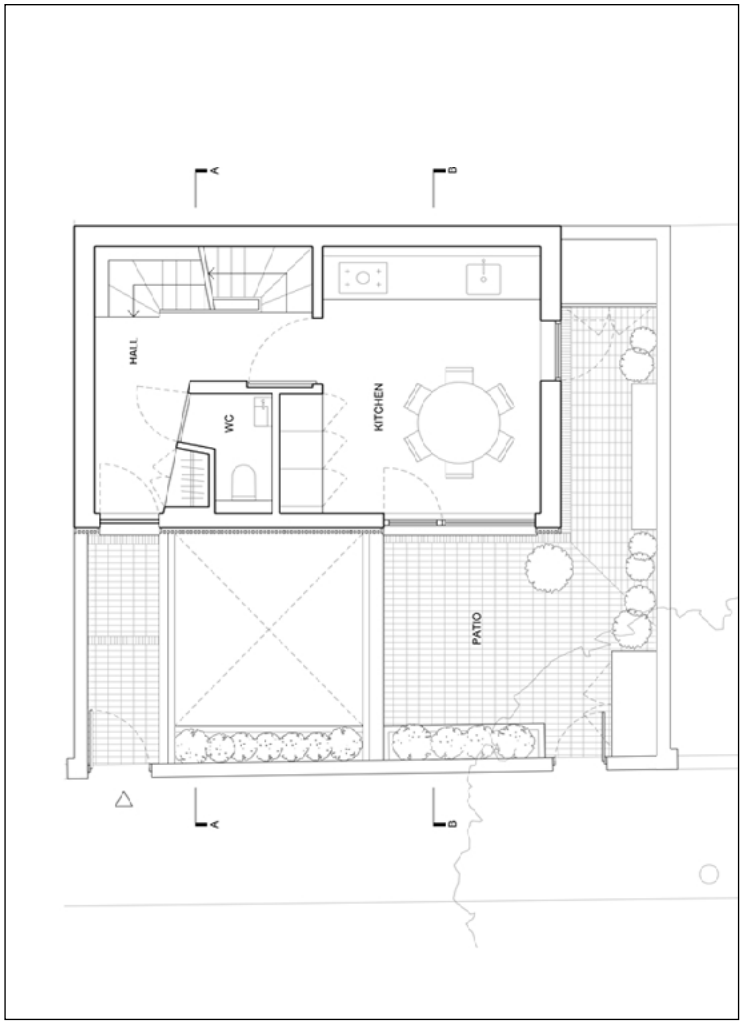
Fig.5.36 - Well-lit kitchen and dining space leading out to garden.
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]

STREET-FACING

POCKET HOUSE

Built on a site that previously contained a double garage and had a buildable area of 35 square metres, the project delivers a family home that thoughtfully responds to the site's physical restrictions.





Project Information
Architect: Tikari Works
Client: Tikari Works
Borough: Southwark
Address: 61D Melbourne Grove, London, SE22 8RG
Completion date: March 2018
Current PTAL: 4

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 82
Site area gross (sqm): 82
Parking numbers: 0

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
Maximum height above ground level (m): 5.5
Maximum number of storeys: 2 (plus basement)

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 105 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.37 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.38 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN SOUTHWARK

The massing of the house is subtly sculpted and set back at first floor level to align with the row of semi-detached hoses adjacent. This helps continue the strong line of the existing street frontage. Above ground a veil of fine timber wraps the ground and first floors, offering privacy as well as solar shading.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

The design places the living area at the top of the house to maximise light and views, while the bedrooms are located in the basement and around a sunken courtyard. The basement courtyard allows daylight to penetrate deep into the shallow floor plan of the house. At ground level a further external planted area is provided, which is overlooked by the kitchen and dining are.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The primary aspect of windows of habitable rooms is towards the main street and external planted areas. This helps to maintain the privacy to neighbouring properties and gardens. The carefully positioned windows and curated views make the home feel larger.

Fig.5.39 - New house is in-line with existing building lines and of a scale that sits comfortably in its existing context.
[Credit: Edmund Sumner]

Fig.5.40 - Courtyard garden brings light to basement bedrooms as well as providing goo views out.
[Credit: Edmund Sumner]

SOUTH LONDON HOUSE

The award-winning house was designed around a courtyard to make the most of the complex urban infill site. The building's layout capitalises on the irregularly shaped site through an ingenious combination of rectilinear and non-rectilinear spaces.

Project Information
Architect: the Oval partnership
Client: private
Borough: Lewisham
Address: Crossfield Street, Deptford
Completion date: 2019
Current PTAL: n/a

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 82
Site area gross (sqm): 82
Parking numbers: 0

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
Maximum height above ground level (m): 5.5
Maximum number of storeys: 2 (plus basement)

Tenure
Market sale: 100%

Planning use split
Residential: 105 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.41 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.42 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN LEWISHAM

The development responds sensitively to the Grade I Listed St Paul's Church through its scale and use of black-stained timber, which references earlier timber-clad houses prevalent in Deptford in the 17th and 18th Centuries. The timber sits modestly above the original brick wall that borders the site from the street.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The house establishes a successful relationship with its surrounding neighbours and maintains their privacy through the use of carefully located windows with deep reveals and oblique views; they are never directly overlooked. The architect has adeptly managed multiple party wall awards and the sewer running below the site to deliver a successful project.

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

Working with energy consultants Enhabit, the house met Code for Sustainable Homes 4 through a variety of sustainable measures, including a comprehensive insulation and airtightness strategy. The development uses thermal solar panels and a MVHR heat recovery system.

The development retains and reuses the existing boundary wall and has a wild flower green roof that improves the site's biodiversity.

Fig.5.43 - The scale and massing of the development is subservient to it's surroundings, but has a clear and well detailed architectural language.

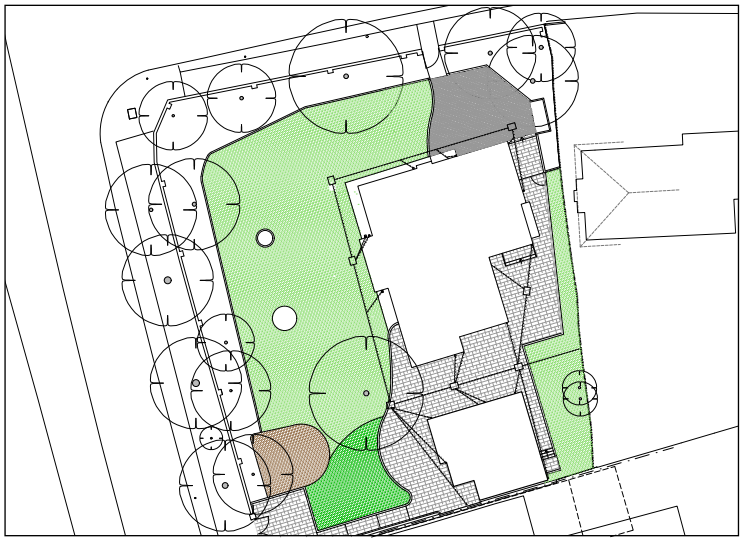
Fig.5.44 - The development used the existing walls as part of the design to enhance the existing character of the street.

Fig.5.45 - A courtyard garden provide ample daylight to all rooms in the development

STREET-FACING

PRINCES WAY HOUSES

This multi-generational development in Wimbledon created a new annex dwelling within the grounds of an existing house and extended the main house to provide additional living spaces, while preserving historic features of the original architecture.



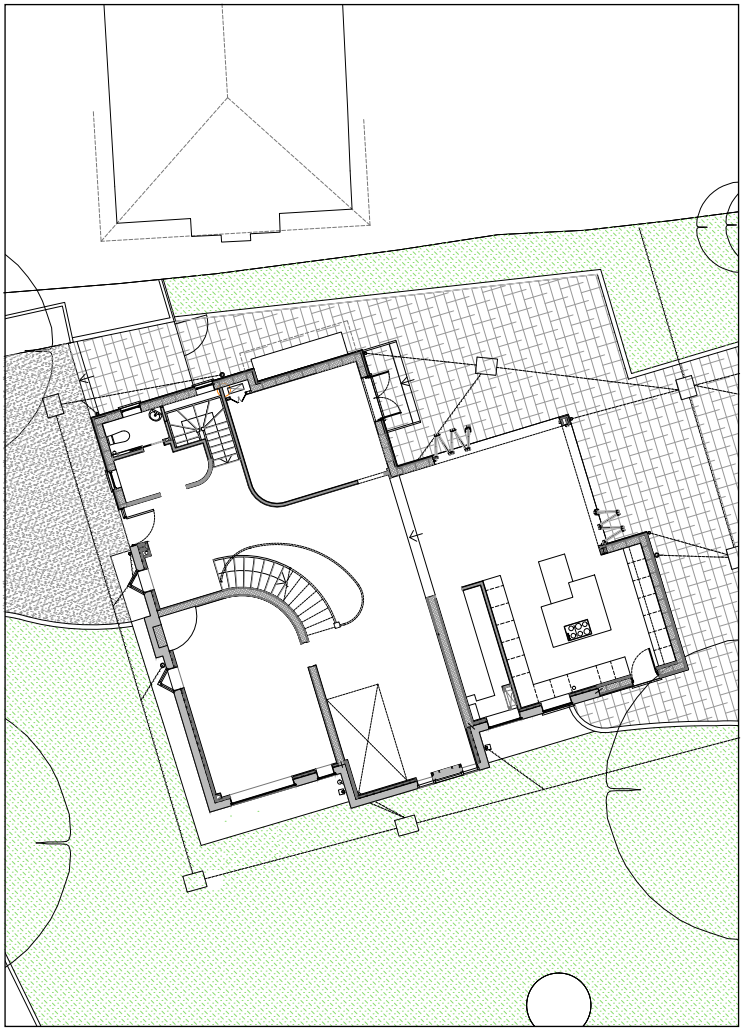


Fig.5.1 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.2 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

Project Information
Architect: Frost Architects
Client: Private
Borough: Wandsworth
Address: 69 Princes Way, London, SW19 6HY
Completion date: November 2014
Current PTAL: 2

Site Characteristics
Site area: 1046 sqm
Parking numbers: N/A

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 1
7-bed: 1
Total: 2
Maximum height above ground level (m): 9.5
Maximum number of storeys: 3

Tenure
n/a

Planning use split
Residential: 253 sqm

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN MERTON

The original building 1930's house was identified as an important part of the Conservation Area. The proposal involved carefully stripping the building of later 1950's and 1980's additions and making sympathetic additions to provide additional living space.

Fig.5.3 - Former engine bays converted into living space.
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

MADE IN MERTON

Adjacent to the main house, a new 2 bedroom annex was created to provide a home to the owners' elderly parents. The annexe stands as a detached building to the south of the main house. Its size, scale and massing avoids encroaching on the visual gap between the dwelling and neighbouring properties. The annexe was designed to be clearly ancillary to the main house in terms of its scale, massing and appearance.

Fig.5.4- Existing fire-fighter accommodation converted into flats.
[Credit: Kilian O'Sullivan]

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

A fabric-first approach resulted in improvements to the existing building without impacting its historic fabric.

STREET-FACING

NEWHAM HOUSING

The architects were appointed by the London Borough of Newham to assess the potential for developing a standard terraced house that could be used to provide affordable council housing across 17 sites throughout the Borough. Standard designs for 3-bed 6-person terraced houses that could be replicated across the sites were created.

Project Information
Architect: Bell Phillips Architects
Client: Newham Council
Borough: Newham
Address: 2-14 Florence Road, London, E6 1DZ
Completion date: Florence Road: November 2015
Current PTAL: 5

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 1000
Site area gross (sqm): -
Parking numbers: 1

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 3-bed: 7
Total: 7
Maximum height above ground level (m): 9.5
Maximum number of storeys: 2 (plus basement)

Tenure
Social rent: 100%

Planning use split
Residential

Fig.5.5 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.6 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

FIT FOR PURPOSE

The proposal sought to deliver excellent quality of space, light and amenity regardless of orientation and context. The result is a 3-storey terraced house with garden at the rear and roof terrace at the front to animate the street. A central light-well, brings natural light down through the heart of the house. A second floor terrace supplements the rear garden providing private amenity whilst animating the street.

Fig.5.7 - View of new street of terrace.
[Credit: Bell Phillips Architecture]

FIT FOR PURPOSE

The homes were designed to Lifetime Home Standards, allowing flexibility in the layout for future alterations to suit life circumstances.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Low-level planting is incorporated into front gardens of each house. This brings interest to the streetscape and provides defensible space for residents. This gives a sense of privacy, safety and security by providing defensible space.

Fig.5.8 - View of front elevation and defensible space.
[Credit: Bell Phillips Architecture]

STREET-FACING

CROXTED ROAD

Croxted Road is a mixed-use scheme on the site of a former dairy building. The scheme comprises nine residential units (two-bed units and three-bed maisonettes), four retail units and a doctor's surgery,

Fig.5.9 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.10 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

Project Information
Architect: Panter Hudspith
Client: The Dulwich Estate
Borough: Southwark
Address: 13-19 Croxted Road, London, SE21 8SZ
Completion date: August 2018
Current PTAL: 2

Site Characteristics
Site area (sqm): 1480
Parking numbers: 0

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 2-bed: 5
3-bed: 4
Total: 9
Maximum height above ground level (m): 14.3
Maximum number of storeys: 4

Tenure
PRS: 100%

Planning use split
Surgery: 500 sqm
Retail: 515 sqm
Residential: 1020 sqm GIA

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN SOUTHWARK

The building uses familiar elements in a contemporary manner, making striking use of a dual pitch dormer roof which is clad in a burnished copper-coloured metal and rests lightly on a brick residential terrace. Buff-toned brickwork is used extensively with openings framed in light-toned precast, also forms the surrounds of the shop front at street level, providing a civic quality to the facade.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The project is a mixed use scheme integrating retail, residential and medical uses on a single site. The GP Surgery replaced an existing nearby Surgery serving 5,500 patients that was due for closure. The new doctors' surgery is capable of accommodating up to 7000 patients which would more than compensate for the loss of the existing community facility. The proposed development provides a fit for purpose facility which has the potential to bring benefit to the local community.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Retail units front the main street and continue the parade of shop fronts. The doctor surgery is located behind the retail units, accessed via its own private entrance pavilion alongside the pharmacy. The waiting area is top lit and the treatment rooms look onto a richly planted courtyard, creating a private, calm and relaxing environment for staff and patients alike. Accessways into the separate elements of the scheme are clearly delineated and communal and private spaces are defined by boundary treatments and gates.

Fig.5.11 - Ground floor retail units continue the parade of shop fronts. [Credit: Panter Hudspith]

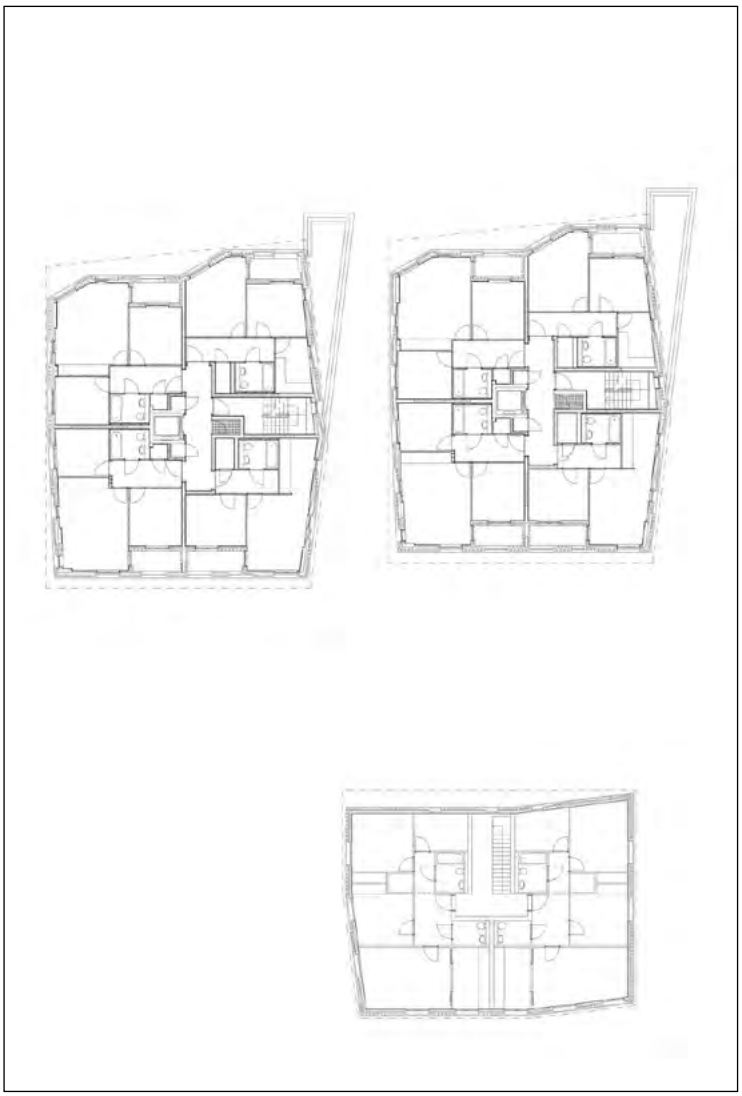
Fig.5.12 - Residents' access overlooking courtyard in the GP Surgery. [Credit: Panter Hudspith]

Fig.5.13 - Entrance to GP surgery is marked out by a form in keeping with neighbouring properties. [Credit: Panter Hudspith]

STREET-FACING

FINSBURY PARK VILLAS

The road on which the site is located is characterised by large Victorian villas, which give the street a distinctive grain. The new villas were developed in response to the specific site conditions and both the choice of materials and design are rooted in the context of the site. This reinforces a feeling of appropriateness.



Project Information
Architect: Sergison Bates
Client: Circle 33 Housing Trust (later merged with Clarion Housing)
Borough: Haringey
Address: 378-386 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4 2PL
Completion date: July 2008
Current PTAL: 6a

Site Characteristics
Site area: 2,200 sqm
Parking numbers: 13

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 18
2-bed: 12
3-bed: 10
4-bed: 4
Total: 44
Maximum height above ground level (m): 15
Maximum number of storeys: 3-6

Tenure
Affordable: 73%
Social rent: 27%

Planning use split
Residential: 2756 sqm (GIA)

Fig.5.14 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.15 (Bottom)
First floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

FIT FOR PURPOSE

The villa blocks' plan of four flats per floor results in each dwelling occupying a corner and affording them all dual aspect. To maximise the advantage of the privileged location on the edge of a park, the villas include large windows and balconies. These provide many resident with views over the park.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The villas offer family-sized maisonettes at ground and first floor level, providing ease of access and a direct relationship with surrounding amenity space. Apartments are located above, with internal layouts designed to allow maximum flexibility in the use of rooms. This is exemplified by the generous proportions of the hallways, which lend themselves to be used as more than simple circulation spaces with scope to accommodate furniture or perhaps be used as play areas.

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

The project was designed to make use of solar gain to reduce life-cycle energy use. Within the constraints of a dense urban site, most of the elevation is orientated towards the south, while the faceted elevations turn towards the evening sunlight. Main rooms are located towards the main façades to receive maximum sunlight, while service rooms tend to be located on the east and west façades. Each of the three buildings is compact in plan and roughly square in proportion, so as to minimise external envelope.

Fig.5.16 - Accommodation is split between three villa blocks which match the scale and mass of existing villas on the main road.
[Credit: Stephan Muller]

Fig.5.17 - Main rooms are located towards the main façades to receive maximum sunlight.
[Credit: Stephan Muller]

STREET-FACING

BOURNE ESTATE

This scheme provides 75 new residential units in a mix of tenures, with improved public realm and open spaces, on the Grade II listed Bourne Estate in London Borough of Camden. The scheme introduces two new blocks in a form and scale that is in keeping with the original grade II listed estate layout.

Project Information
Architect: Matthew Lloyd Architects
Client: London Borough of Camden
Borough: Camden
Address: Bourne Estate, South Portpool Lane, London. EC1N
Completion date: October 2017
Current PTAL: 4

Site Characteristics
Site area: n/a
Parking numbers: 42 (cars), 80 (cycles)

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 23
2-bed: 35
3-bed: 14
4-bed: 3
Total: 75
Maximum height above ground level (m): -
Maximum number of storeys: 5 (plus basement)

Tenure
Affordable: 10%
Social rent: 37%
Market sale: 53%

Planning use split
Non-residential: 216 sqm
Residential: 7338 sqm (GIA)

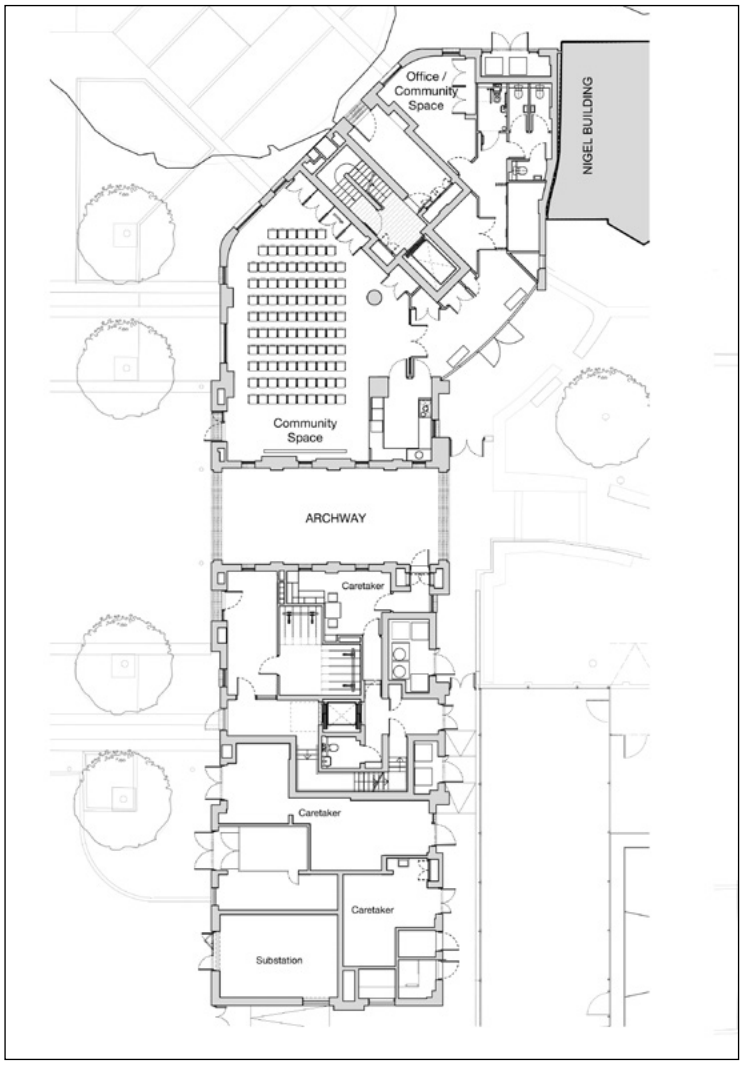


Fig.5.18 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.19 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN CAMDEN

The new infill derives from and responds to the original architecture: the footprint of the new blocks respond to those of the adjacent buildings in a form and position that seems to complete the original layout. The large areas of glazed tiled façades link to the character of the existing estate buildings. The tall arched entrances through the block are a contemporary interpretation of the arched entrances prominent on the original buildings.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Positioning maisonettes at ground level results in multiple entrances at street level, helping to activate the surrounding public space and streets. Provision of external private amenity space for every home helps to liven facades and provide natural surveillance over the public areas.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The access decks are a key communal feature that provide good views over the shared playground area and serve as outdoor extensions to the living area.

Fig.5.20 - New addition to the estate features quality materials t match the Grade II listed existing buildings
[Credit: Benedict Luxmoore]

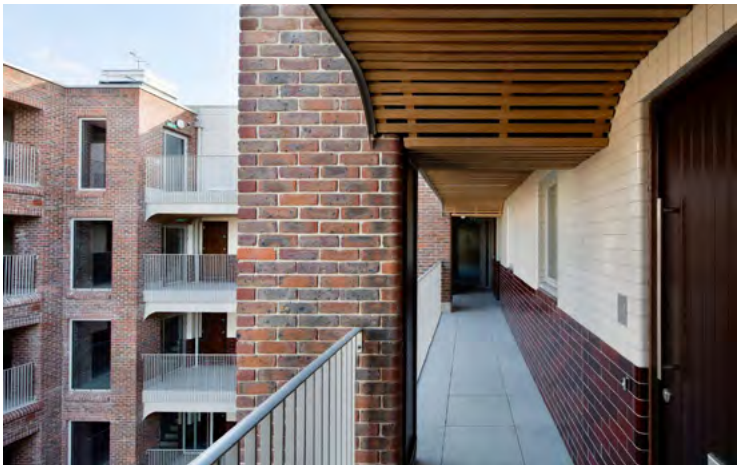


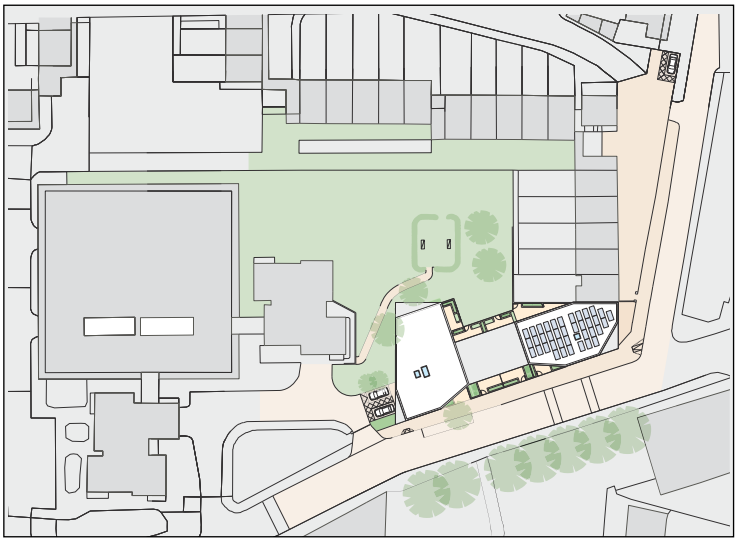
Fig.5.21 - Deck access to flats allow create communal spaces tat allow residents to meet.
[Credit: Benedict Luxmoore]

Fig.5.22 - Communal play area incorporated into the proposed works.
[Credit: Benedict Luxmoore]

STREET-FACING

MARKLAKE COURT

This design for 27 new flats and maisonettes on the site of existing garages represents a new, ground-up approach to affordable housing delivery. Residents on the Kipling Estate were frustrated by overcrowding in existing homes and the lack of new affordable housing in the local area. They identified an underutilised garage site, established a community benefit society, obtained funding and formulated a brief. The brief, which was informed by a housing needs study, would see under-occupying older residents moved into the new building, in order to release larger dwellings for families.



Project Information
Architect: Bell Phillips Architects
Client: Leathermarket Community Benefit Society
Borough: Southwark
Address: Weston Street, London, SE1 3GX
Completion date: July 2019
Current PTAL: 6a

Site Characteristics
Site area net (sqm): 894
Parking numbers: 3

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 4
2-bed: 14
3-bed: 9
Total: 27
Maximum height above ground level (m): 26
Maximum number of storeys: 7

Tenure
Social rent: 100%

Planning use split
Residential:

Fig.5.23 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.24 (Bottom)
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

MADE IN SOUTHWARK

Aided by the architect and development managers the design was shaped through extensive local consultation, undertaken over more than a year. Every aspect of the design, from the overall massing, through to flat layouts, materials, fishes and window sizes was developed through close discussion with the local community.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

Each of the 27 new homes were designed with their new tenants needs in mind. Ground floor maisonettes were planned for those with mobility issues, and a particularly large family flat was slotted into the central section. Duplex flats are located at ground floor level to provide additional privacy and security for residents. New flats are dual aspect with generous balconies and large communal terraces above the duplexes.

Fig.5.26 - The contemporary addition strengthens the corner of the street and abuts the existing housing block.
[Credit: Killian O'Sullivan]

Fig.5.25 - Front doors onto the street provides a strong active street frontage with generous amenity above.

STREET-FACING

MAPLETON CRESCENT

This slender 27-storey building was constructed on a leftover site from the development of the nearby shopping centre. The site is bounded by the River Wandle on one side and a sub-station and road to the others. The project created 53 one bedroom discounted pocket homes sold to local first time buyers and 36 two and three bedroom open market homes.

Project Information
Architect: Metropolitan Workshop
Client: Pocket Living
Borough: Wandsworth
Address: 11 Mapleton Crescent, London, SW18 4AU
Completion date: June 2018
Current PTAL: 4

Site Characteristics
Site area: 476 sqm
Parking numbers: 0

Building Characteristics
Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 53
2-bed: 25
3-bed: 11
Total: 89
Maximum height above ground level (m): 89.3
Maximum number of storeys: 27

Tenure
Affordable: 60%
Market sale: 40%

Planning use split
Residential: 7700 sqm (GIA)

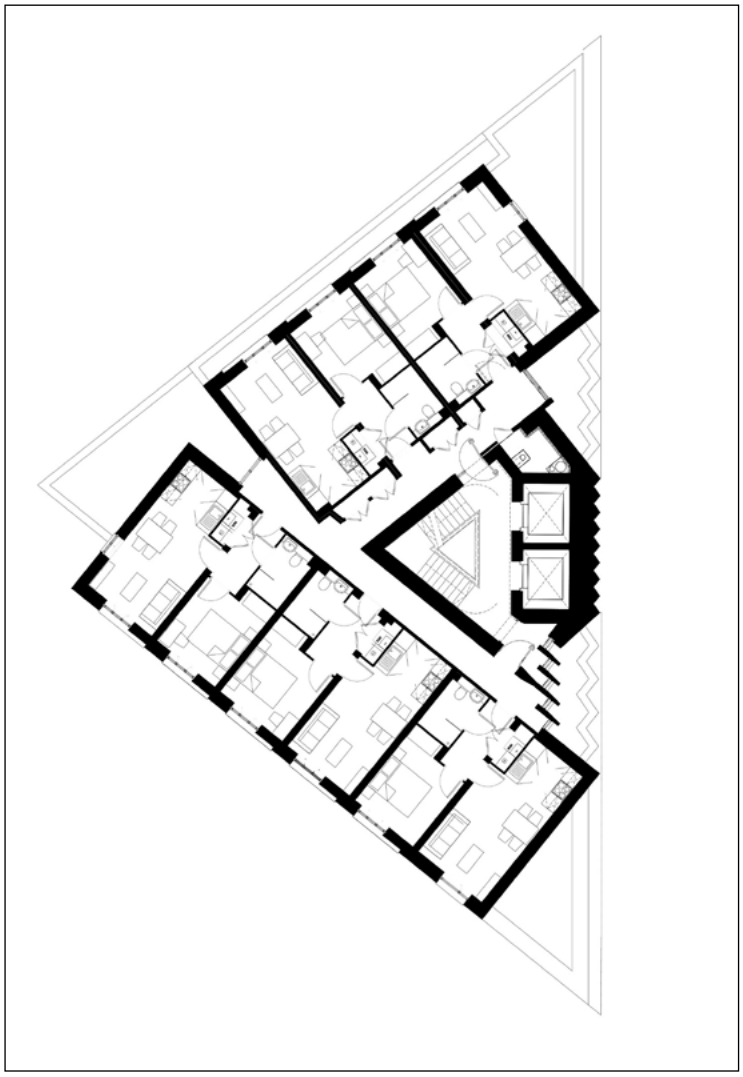


Fig.5.27 (Top)
Site plan.

Fig.5.28 (Bottom)
Typical floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

FIT FOR PURPOSE

The building has a slender profile with two wings of accommodation around a stair and lift core. The building, entrance, residents' lounge and cycle storage have a considered relationship to the River Wandle, whilst the plant and refuse storage have been handled well within the constrained floor space available, occupying less advantageous boundaries.

Fig.5.29 - Typical flat
[Credit: Simon Kennedy]

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The building provides a mix of tenures including 53 one bedroom discounted homes for first time buyers and 36 two and three bedroom open market homes. The building provides communal terraces and a resident's lounge allowing opportunities for neighbours to meet and interact with one another.

ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

The 27 storey tower was constructed using off-site construction methods which lead to several programme benefits, including easing the logistics on the tight site, 60% fewer truck journeys than conventional construction and 90% reduction in construction waste. The tower is made up of storey-high units that arrived on site complete with windows, doors, wiring, plumbing, paint and tiles. The units were then craned into position at the rate of one storey per day. This construction method eliminated the need for on-site storage on a very restricted small site.

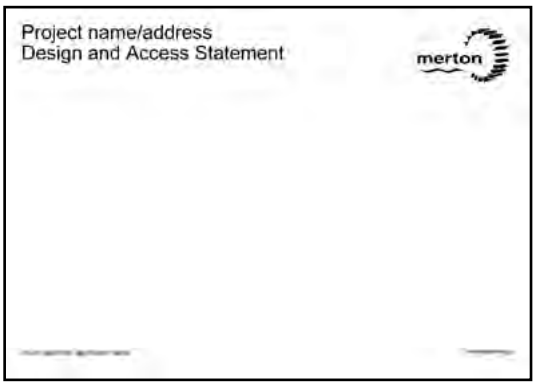
Fig.5.30 - View to tower from the river Wandle.
[Credit: Simon Kennedy]

This document forms part of the Small Sites Toolkit SPD. Please see other tools to assist you with the design of your development.

01. Design Guidance
A sequence of questions and recommendations to guide you when designing your project. Merton Council will use these guidance notes to appraise your project during the planning process.

02. Case Studies
A selection of relevant case studies illustrating exemplar developments that have been delivered on small sites. Using thoughtful solutions the designers of these projects have successfully overcome some of the obstacles a small site development may encounter.

03. Design and Access Statement Template
As part of your planning application, you must produce a Design and Access Statement (DAS). A DAS will help explain and justify your proposal. The template has a checklist of necessary information to include with your application to make sure Merton Council can accurately appraise you project.



MERTON COUNCIL

FUTURE MERTON

Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX

Project name/address
Design and Access Statement

Insert agent or applicant name

Issued: dd/mm/yyyy

ABOUT	This resource should be read alongside our Small Sites Toolkit SPD. Produced by FutureMerton.
PURPOSE	For applications for planning permission and/or listed building consent to create new residential units on sites of 0.25Ha or less.
USE	This statement will help you convey the design thinking behind your proposal and to demonstrate that your proposal will be accessible to all users. Each section allows you to include drawings and images to support your application. You may choose to refer to drawings and images elsewhere that accompany your submission. In each section, please provide as much relevant information as possible in favour of your proposal, while being brief. You may find that some sections are not relevant to your application. Where this is the case, please state that the section is 'not applicable' and provide a brief explanation. A submission checklist is included at the end of this document to help you provide the required information for your application.
VERSION	For adoption
NOTES	

1. BRIEF

This section should set out your approach to achieving a design solution.				
a. What is the purpose of the proposal?				
b. Have there been previous planning applications on the site that are relevant to your proposal? Provide give a brief summary noting application numbers and a description of the proposal.				
c. Have you received any pre-application feedback? Provide a summary of comments.				
d. How has the design developed to the current proposal?				
e. What principles underlie the architectural design?				
f. Other relevant information.				
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.				
g. Provide information of other design options that were pursued. Include diagrams, plans, and any other visual material to help your descriptions.				
h. Does your proposal take inspiration from the local context? Provide example images and diagrams.				
i. Other relevant visual information				

2. CONTEXT

This section should explain the context within which the site or existing building sits.

a. What boundaries surround the site? Describe their materials, dimensions and any other relevant features.	
b. Are there any immediately adjoining buildings and sites?	
c. Are there nearby conservation areas or listed buildings that are key design considerations?	
d. Are there aspects of the character of the local area that have influenced your design, for example history, topography, landscape, economic activities, culture, etc.? (Make use our Borough Character Study to better understand the character of the local neighbourhood)	
e. Other relevant information.	

Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.

f. Provide a site plan clearly locating nearby conservation areas, listed buildings and other neighbouring buildings and sites. Include protected and mature trees and vegetation.				
g. Provide images of the existing site, neighbouring buildings and spaces and the streetscene.				
h. Provide photographs, sketches or diagrams which show the local features that have influenced your design as well as precedents of similar developments in similar context.				
i. Other relevant visual information.				

3. ACCESS

This section should demonstrate how the proposal provides safe and convenient access for all users.

VEHICULAR AND TRANSPORT LINKS	
a. What existing public transport provisions are nearby?	
b. Does your proposal take into account existing transport links? How has this affected car and cycle parking provisions?	
c. How will the site be approached and accessed?	
d. Do you wholly own the site and access?	
e. Where will the site be accessed? Why has this access point been chosen?	
f. How does your proposal accommodate movement on the site? Why was this route chosen?	
g. Are there any car parking provisions on site including setting-down points and dropped kerbs? Provide information on existing and proposed car parking numbers.	
h. Are there any cycle parking provisions on site? Provide information on existing and proposed cycle parking numbers.	
i. What is the proposed refuse collection strategy? Make use of our design guidance on refuse storage and collection.	
j. Other relevant information.	
INCLUSIVE ACCESS	
k. Are entrances located so they are visible?	

l. How does your proposal accommodate vertical and horizontal movement?	
m. What WC facilities will be provided within the building?	
n. Are you making any special provisions to accommodate building users of different physical abilities?	
o. How will pedestrians access and move around the site?	
p. Other relevant information.	
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.	
q. Provide a site plan(s) drawing clearly showing: • the extent of the site in the applicant's ownership (clearly note any access to the site under shared ownership or not owned by the applicant), • proposed vehicular access points and routes on site, • proposed pedestrian access points and routes on site. • Car parking layout	
r. Provide a plan drawing along with elevations clearly showing the location of cycle storage with details of proposed materials, numbers of parking spaces and security provisions.	
s. Provide a plan drawing along with elevations clearly showing the location of the bin storage with details of proposed materials.	
t. Provide a site plan showing the existing and proposed refuse collection strategies, including the width and length of the access way from the refuse store to the refuse collection point.	

u. Provide plan drawings with internal layouts showing WC facilities and any special access accommodations.	
v. Other relevant visual information.	

4. LAYOUT AND USE

This section should explain how the building(s) along with public and private spaces will be arranged on the site.	
a. How much will be built on the site?	
b. How is the building(s) positioned on the site?	
c. How will the building relate to adjacent buildings and sites?	
d. What are the proposed uses of the building?	
e. How do the proposed uses relate to the existing context? Does your proposal meet a local need?	
f. How will the different uses be distributed across the site?	
g. How will the building layout provide safety and security?	
h. Other relevant information.	
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.	
i. Provide a site plan showing the number of proposed units and the proposed floor space for each proposed use (where appropriate).	
j. Provide plan drawings (and section drawings where possible) of proposed buildings, annotated sufficiently to explain purpose of spaces, orientation and scale. Plans should include furniture layouts. Make use of the London Plan space standards in preparing your design.	
k. Other relevant visual information.	

5. SCALE AND APPEARANCE

This section should explain how building(s) will look and sit in relation to surrounding sites.	
a. What are the dimensions of the building(s)?	
b. How does the building(s) relate in scale to its existing context?	
c. What materials will be used externally on the building?	
d. How will the proposed materials complement the existing building and/or local context?	
e. Other relevant information.	
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.	
f. Provide dimensioned plan, section and elevation drawings, showing all proposed buildings, taking into account the surrounding context. All drawings must include critical dimensions from the proposed building to adjacent boundaries, neighbouring buildings and windows of adjacent habitable rooms.	
g. Other relevant visual information.	

6. LANDSCAPE

This section should explain how open spaces will enhance and protect the character of the site and wider context. (If this section if not required please state the reasons.)	
a. What is the function of the proposed landscaping?	
b. Are there any protected trees on the site or on adjacent sites?	
c. If trees are within falling distance of your proposal, provide a summary of the measures set out in your Arboricultural Assessment to mitigate the negative impact of your proposal on existing trees.	
d. Have you provided adequate amenity space in your proposal? If not, provide details of how amenity space will be supplemented.	
e. Other relevant information.	
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.	
f. Provide a site plan drawing detailing: • all existing and proposed boundary treatments. • all existing and proposed hardstanding and parking areas. • all existing planting, shrubs and trees on site and in the surrounding context. • species, size, density and location of proposed trees and shrubs.	
g. Provide a site plan drawing detailing how rainwater will be sustainably managed.	
h. If appropriate, provide a site plan drawing showing the location of your site, noting its proximity, and walking distance to any public open green space.	
i. Other relevant visual information.	

7. HERITAGE

This section should briefly explain the relationship between your proposal and heritage assets in and / or surrounding the site. Additional details should be provided in a separate Heritage Statement.	
a. Which heritage assets will be affected by your proposal?	
b. What is the significance of the affected asset(s)? Does the affected asset(s) contribute to its local setting?	
c. How will your proposal affect the significance of the asset? (Refer to NPPF, section 16 and Merton's Local Plan policy D5.5)	
d. If your proposal negatively affects the significance of the asset, set out the public benefits that justify your proposal.	
e. Other relevant information.	
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.	
f. Provide plan, section and elevation drawings showing the relation of the proposal to the affected heritage asset. This requirement may be fulfilled with the required site plan in section 1.	
g. Other relevant visual information.	

8. SUSTAINABILITY

This section should explain how the design of the proposal will reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency.
See Merton's Explanatory Note on Approaches to Sustainable Design & Construction for more details.

a. How does your proposal aim to meet the Sustainable Design Standards set out in Merton's Local Plan? If you aim to achieve higher carbon reduction targets, please provide more details in a separate Sustainability Statement.	
b. Does your proposal take a 'fabric first' approach to maximise energy efficiency? Provide brief details.	
c. How will your proposal achieve onsite carbon dioxide reduction targets? Provide brief details.	
d. Describe briefly how your proposal will withstand the long-term impacts of climate change, particularly the risk of overheating.	
e. Does your proposal include equipment positioned on or beyond the external fabric of the building, such as mechanical plant, heat pumps, solar panels, air conditioning units, etc.? Please provide brief details of each piece of equipment including the size, finish and noise rating. You should include manufacturer's datasheets to your application.	
f. Other relevant information.	
Provide the following visual material in support of your statements above.	
g. Provide plan drawings showing the location of any proposed heating system, renewable technologies and thermal or battery storage in or around the building.	
h. Provide elevation drawings (and section drawings where relevant) showing the location and size of any equipment mounted on or	

beyond the external fabric of the building. Include details of the material and size of any proposed enclosures.	
i. Other relevant visual information.	

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

This section lists the information required to accompany all planning applications that create new residential units regardless of the number, size of the development or its location.
See our detailed validation checklist for more details on each item listed below and for a more comprehensive list of additional information that may be required.

a. Existing and proposed drawings including a location plan, general arrangements, elevations, sections, street elevation.	Drawings must meet the following requirements: • Drawn to an identifiable scale, usually 1:50 or 1:100 for general arrangement plans, sections and elevations, 1:1250 for location plans and 1:200 for block plans. • Plans must show the direction of north. • General arrangement plans must include furniture layouts. • Site and location plans must a red line around the boundaries of the site. • Drawings must indicate roof pitch and fall. • Include a linear scale bar for all plan, section and elevation drawings. • Include dimensions between buildings on existing and proposed drawings. • Include height of proposed buildings from ground level, as well as the height of existing buildings in the immediate context.
b. Ownership certificate and agricultural land declaration	The certificate must be completed at the time of submission through the Planning Portal.
c. Design and Access Statement	Make use of our template above.
d. Photographs	See requirements in our template above.
e. Community Infrastructure Levy	Applicants must fully complete and submit the Additional CIL Information Requirements form, which is located at https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/1app/forms/cil_questions.pdf
f. Low carbon and renewable technologies	Manufacturer's data sheet to provide details of any proposed low carbon and renewable technologies.
g. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)	Details of the implementation, adoption, maintenance and management of a sustainable drainage system. If your development does not include SUDs you should demonstrate that such measures are not feasible and give details of how drainage will be dealt with.
h. Samples of Materials	Details of the facing materials to be used in the development. This could include sample of the materials, the make and type of materials, manufactures specification accompanied by photographs and RAL numbers.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

This section lists additional information that may be required to accompany planning applications where proposals affect or involve the items identified below.
See our detailed validation checklist for more details on each item listed below and for a more comprehensive list of additional information that may be required.

i. Trees, open spaces, landscaping and biodiversity	• Tree survey • Topographical survey • Tree constraints plan • Arboricultural impact assessment • Arboricultural method statement including a tree protection plan • Landscaping Scheme plans • Phase 1 Habitat Survey • Environmental Statement (Environment Impact Assessment) • Open Space assessment

j. Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and other Heritage Assets	• Heritage Statement heritage asset appraisal • Structural Survey/demolition statement
k. Daylight / Sunlight	• Daylight / sunlight assessment
l. Drainage	• Drainage Strategy
m. Traffic	• Transport assessment • Travel plan
n. Flooding	• Flood Risk Assessment
o. Health	• Air quality assessment • Environmental risk assessment • Noise and Vibration Impact Assessments
p. Basements	• Basement Impact assessments • Outline construction Method Statement • Drainage Strategy • Construction Traffic Management Plan
q. Construction Waste	• Site Waste Management Plan
r. Economy	• Economic statement / Local employment opportunities
s. Street lighting	• Lighting assessment
t. Community Involvement	• Statement of community involvement
u. Student Housing	• Student management plan

MERTON COUNCIL
FUTURE MERTON

SMALL SITES TOOLKIT

CONSULTATION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

FOREWORD

We'd like to thank everyone who has taken the time to be a part of the Small Sites Toolkit SPD.

Over the course of developing the guidance, we have consulted with many experts within the built environment industries, all of which helped inform the direction of our draft design guidance.

The guidance was published online for formal public consultation during 9 February to 23 March 2021.

This report was produced in June 2021.

CONTENTS PAGE

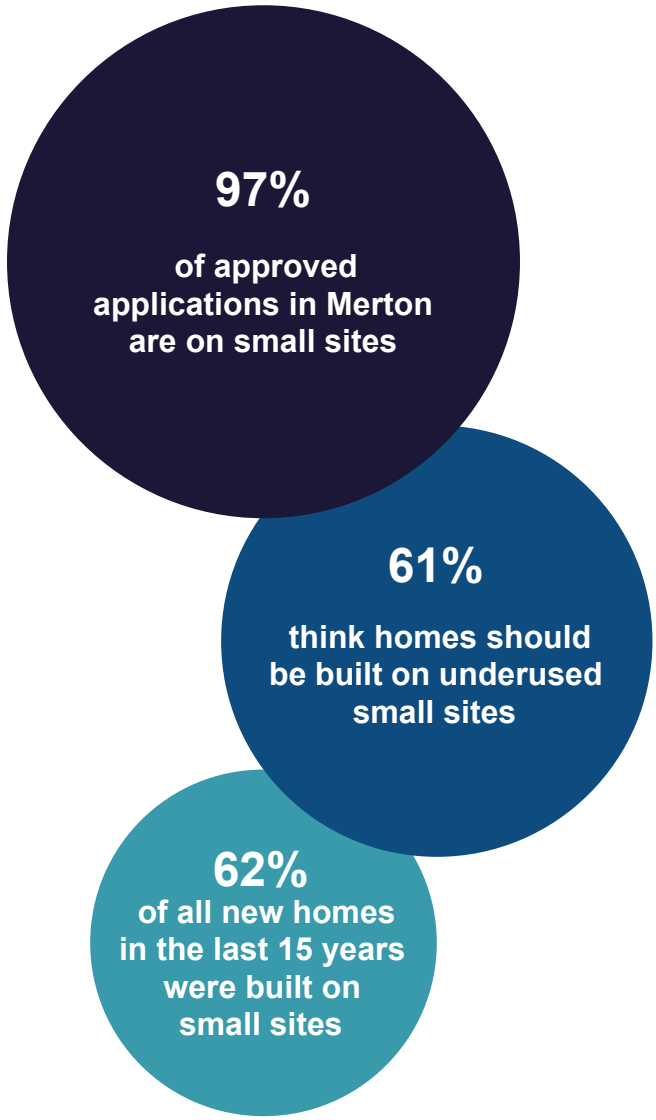
1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Small Sites Toolkit SPD (SSTK) has been developed and produced by Merton Council to provide future applicants with best practice approaches to small sites. In accordance with the London Plan Policy H2, 'Boroughs should pro-actively support well-designed new homes on small sites through both planning decisions and plan-making.'

The toolkit provides a design-led framework to help optimise the housing capacity of small sites. It aims to help craft homes that are of a high quality, enhancing the character of local neighbourhoods, and meet the needs of residents of Merton. We want our new homes to be 'Made in Merton'.

Historically small sites have been crucial to housing delivery in Merton and they continue to offer opportunities to grow Merton's housing stock. Over the last 15 years, small sites have provided over 60% of built homes borough-wide and account for over 95% of approved applications.

In July 2020 Iceni Projects engaged with over 2,000 Merton residents to learn more about the public's perception of development. Amongst the findings of the report, we learnt that the majority of residents (61%) think new homes should be delivered on 'underused small sites'.



1.2 HOW WE CONSULTED

1.2.1 The council is required in accordance with planning legislation to hold a public 6 week consultation. Engagement on the draft Small Sites Toolkit SPD started on 9th February 2021 until 23rd March 2021.

1.2.2 The consultation carried out to support the development of the SPD was in two stages:
i. Informal consultation: With experienced built environment professionals during the preparation of the draft SPD.
ii. Formal consultation: After the draft Small Sites Toolkit SPD had been approved by cabinet in January 2021, a public consultation exercise was carried out including, an online survey, workshop with built environment professionals and presenting at two community forums.

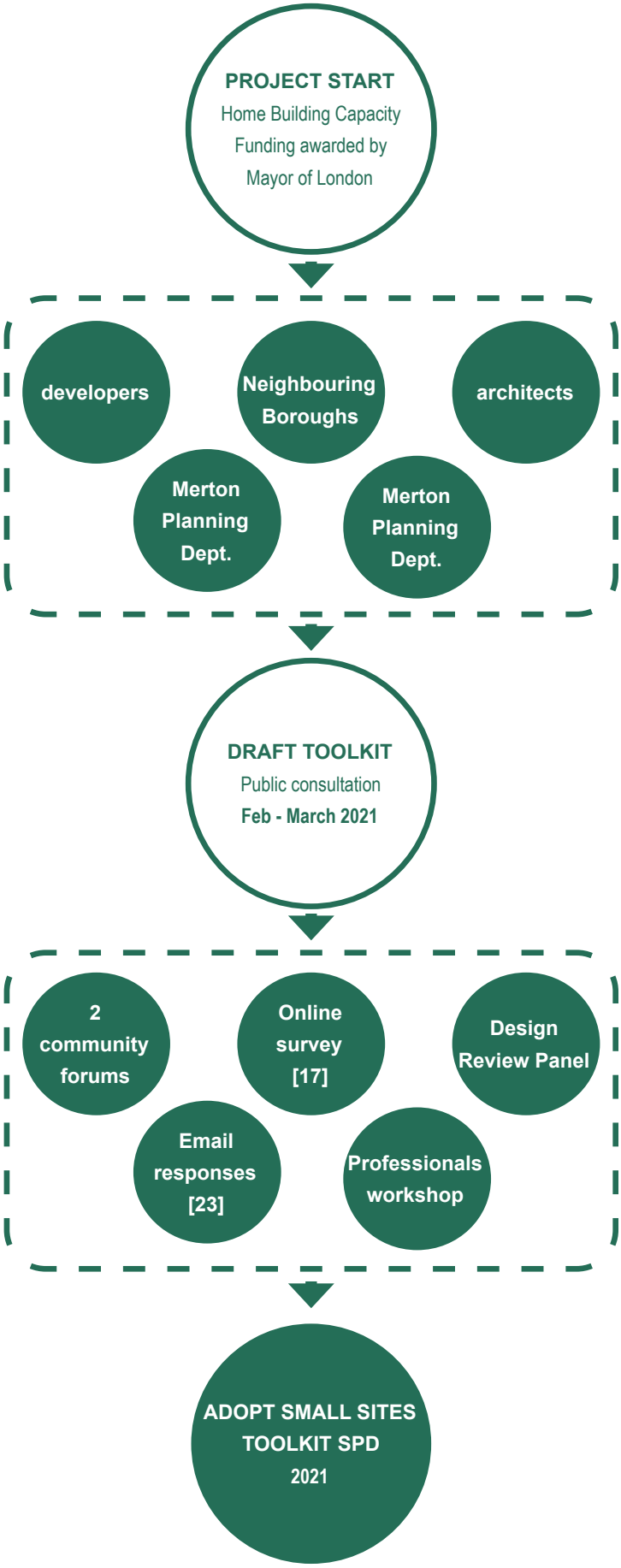
1.2.3 Formal written consultation emails were sent to local residents, businesses, residential groups and organisations, environmental stakeholders (e.g. Environment Agency) and other interested parties.

1.2.4 An email was also sent to circa 600 residents on Merton's Local Plan consultation database.

1.2.5 Future Merton attended and presented at the Mitcham and Morden Community Forums during the consultation period and collected feedback from attendees.

1.2.6 The consultation was also publicised via social media on the council's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

1.2.7 Overall, 40 responses were received to the draft Small Sites Toolkit SPD consultation. Less responses were received via the SurveyMonkey form (17) as opposed to letter or email (23). The questionnaire on Survey Monkey asked for the participant's views on the sections of the SPD and some demographic characteristics.



1.3 FEEDBACK: INTRODUCTION

ANALYSIS

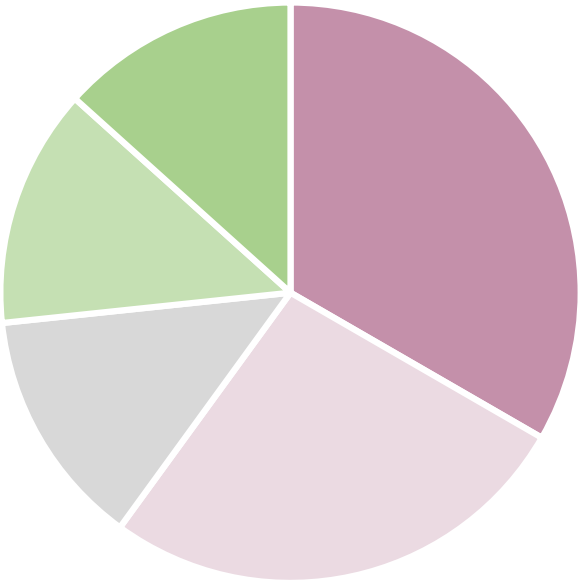
1.2.8 Over half of the respondents who responded via the online survey disagreed with this section. Those who disagreed with this section were against the idea of developing on small sites entirely.

1.2.9 Many emails received from Merton's residents and resident associations welcomed the guidance as they saw it's value in improving the quality of future developments on small sites.

1.2.10 During consultation events with built environment professionals, the guidance was highly supported and welcomed.

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.2.11 Neighbourhood plans to be acknowledged within the policy context section.



Strongly disagree	34%	[5 respondents]
Disagree	27%	[4 respondents]
Neither	13%	[2 respondents]
Agree	13%	[2 respondents]
Strongly agree	13%	[2 respondents]

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.2.12 As stated in Policy H2 in the London Plan, Boroughs should pro-actively support well-designed new homes on small sites.

1.2.13 As small sites make up a large contribution of planning applications in the borough, it is inevitable that they will continue to be a form of development in the borough, therefore this guidance is relevant.

1.2.14 We support neighbourhood plans and see the value in the knowledge that local residents have on their communities. Neighbourhood plans highlight the values of local people and should be acknowledged.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.2.15 Provide more clarity on the relevance of this SPG in relation to future small sites development.

1.2.16 Neighbourhood plans to be added to the policy context.

1.4 FEEDBACK: HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

ANALYSIS

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.4.1 More emphasis on the value of early public consultation.

1.4.2 Make clearer the use of the council's pre-application service.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

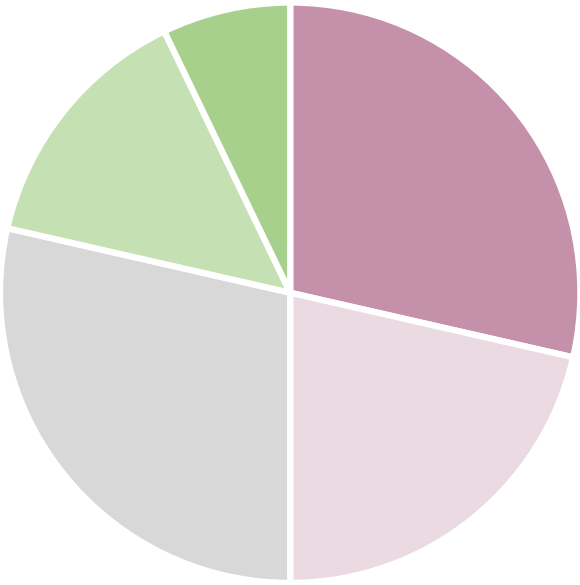
1.4.3 The council greatly value the local knowledge that local residents have to help inform future development. As highlighted in the NPPF, *"Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot."*

1.4.4 The council's pre-application service assists applications on best practice approaches in the borough.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.4.5 Further guidance on appropriate engagement with local people.

1.4.6 Provide further clarity on the value of the council's pre-application service.



Strongly disagree	29% [4 respondents]
Disagree	21% [3 respondents]
Neither	29% [4 respondents]
Agree	14% [2 respondents]
Strongly agree	7% [1 respondents]

1.5 FEEDBACK: SITE CONDITIONS

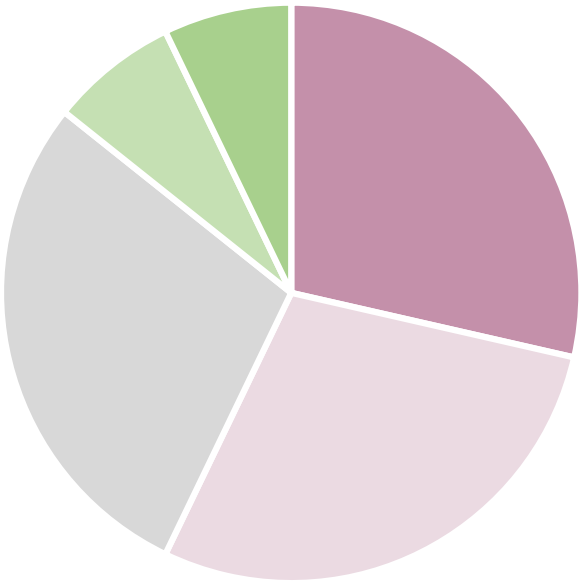
ANALYSIS

1.5.1 Many comments specifically related to an objection to backland development and potential loss of existing trees and vegetation.

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.5.2 More site constraints, such as legal covenants, mature trees, geology.

1.5.3 More diverse built examples as it was felt, in particular for the backland development, that they were too similar and does not reflect the character of Merton.



Strongly disagree	28%	[4 respondents]
Disagree	29%	[4 respondents]
Neither	29%	[4 respondents]
Agree	7%	[1 respondents]
Strongly agree	7%	[1 respondents]

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.5.4 Backland development is an re-occuring type of development within the borough and will be ongoing with or without this guidance. The SPG aims to provide design guidance to make future developments of this type better quality.

1.5.5 It is mentioned that site constraints are not limited to what is listed as each development site will have a unique set of constraints to respond to.

1.5.6 Specific design guidance to how some constraints can be approached is found within the main guidance chapters.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.5.7 Additional text to highlight ‘mature trees and vegetation and existing natural environments’ as a practical issue to consider under constraints.

1.5.8 Precedents to be updated to provide more design diversity and within similar contexts found in Merton.

1.6 FEEDBACK: GOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

ANALYSIS

1.6.1 The good design principles were generally welcomed and supported.

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.6.2 Design principle ‘Made in Merton’ to remove active travel as an objective and for it to be accommodated elsewhere.

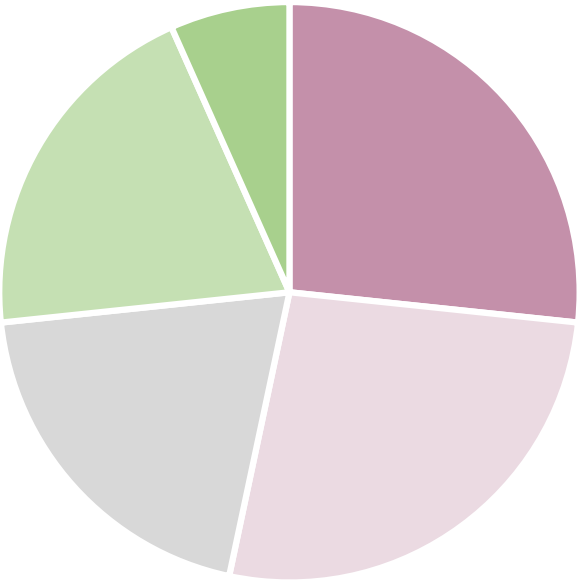
1.6.3 Further emphasis on the guidance that responds to the climate emergency.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.6.4 It is clear that the climate emergency is of great importance to local residents. Specific design guidance that helps contribute to a net-zero carbon future can be found in the main design guidance chapters.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.6.5 The council recognise the importance to promote active travel as a key objective and will accommodate it in another good design principle



Strongly disagree	27% [4 respondents]
Disagree	27% [4 respondents]
Neither	20% [3 respondents]
Agree	20% [3 respondents]
Strongly agree	6% [1 respondents]

1.7 FEEDBACK: MADE IN MERTON

ANALYSIS

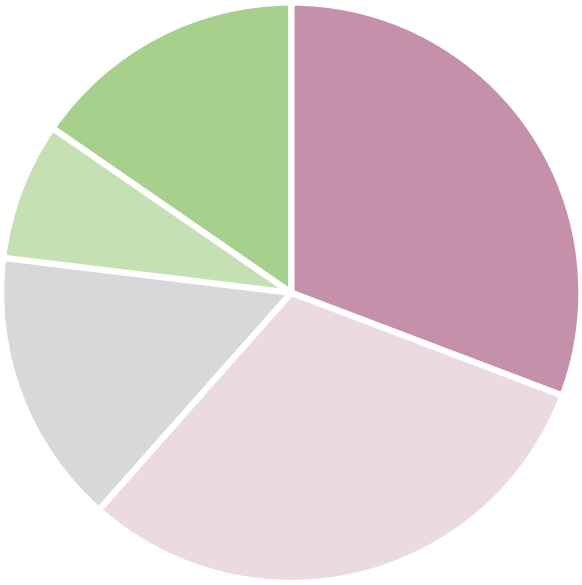
1.7.1 Over half of the online survey respondents disagreed with this section. Many respondents supported this principle, but thought there was missing guidance outlined below.

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.7.2 Further information on working with heritage assets.

1.7.3 More information on the value of early public engagement.

1.7.4 Active travel to be accommodated elsewhere.



Strongly disagree	31%	[4 respondents]
Disagree	31%	[4 respondents]
Neither	15%	[2 respondents]
Agree	8%	[1 respondents]
Strongly agree	15%	[2 respondents]

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.7.5 The council greatly value the local knowledge that local residents have to help inform future development. As highlighted in the NPPF, *"Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot."*

1.7.6 Developments that include heritage assets or the setting of heritage assets are judged case by case by Merton's conservation officers.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.7.7 Additional text and links to relevant existing Historic England guidance to development and Merton's Local Character Appraisals.

1.7.8 Active travel guidance will be accommodated elsewhere.

1.7.9 Further information on public engagement will be included.

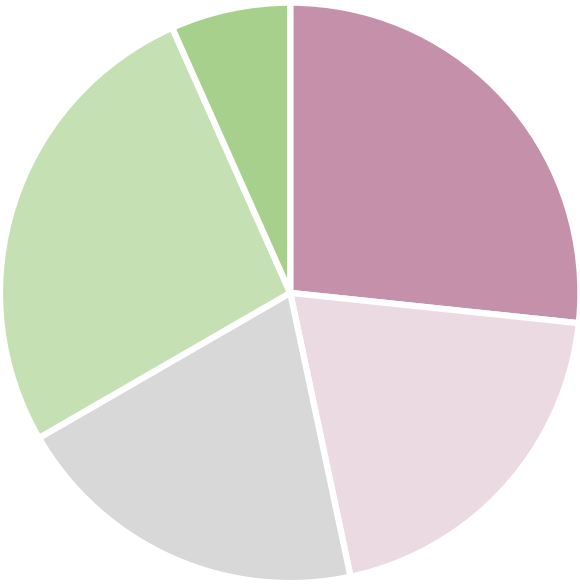
1.8 FEEDBACK: FIT FOR PURPOSE

ANALYSIS

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.8.1 Specific guidance to address separation distances.

1.8.2 Further guidance on daylight and sunlight to neighbouring properties.



Strongly disagree	27% [4 respondents]
Disagree	20% [3 respondents]
Neither	20% [3 respondents]
Agree	27% [4 respondents]
Strongly agree	6% [1 respondents]

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.8.3 The guidance does not give specific quantitative separation distances but gives qualitative guidance to protect any significant impact to privacy and overlooking. Historically 18m separation distances between facing homes were used as a rule of thumb, however this can sometimes restrict good use of land and create places that are of a inhuman scale.

1.8.4 Further guidance on daylight / sunlight can be found in ‘putting people first’.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.8.5 Add more clarity on separation distances and daylight / sunlight guidance.

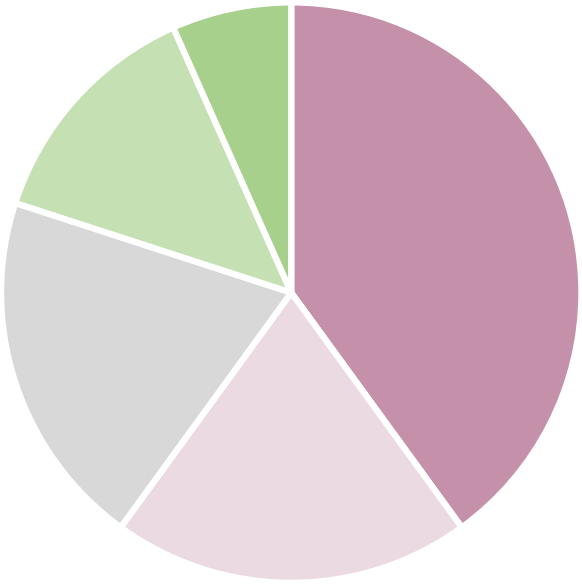
1.9 FEEDBACK: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

ANALYSIS

1.9.1 The online survey respondents disagreed most with this section with 40% (6 respondents) strongly disagreeing.

The comments from the consultation asked for:

1.9.2 better guidance for the protection of daylight and sunlight to existing amenity



Strongly disagree	40%	[6 respondents]
Disagree	20%	[3 respondents]
Neither	20%	[3 respondents]
Agree	13%	[2 respondents]
Strongly agree	7%	[1 respondents]

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.9.3 The toolkit provides rule of thumb guidance and sign posts to the relevant daylight / sunlight guidance for applicants.

1.9.4 Planning applications will be judged on a case by case basis. Developments may be asked to provide daylight/sunlight reports to prove that they do not significantly impact neighbouring properties.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.9.5 Add further guidance on the daylight / sunlight.

1.10 FEEDBACK: ECONOMICAL AND SUSTAINABLE

ANALYSIS

1.10.1 This chapter was generally welcomed however the main comments from the consultation asked for:

1.10.2 include retaining existing buildings as well as encouraging a fabric first approach.

1.10.3 further guidance on working with existing mature trees and vegetation

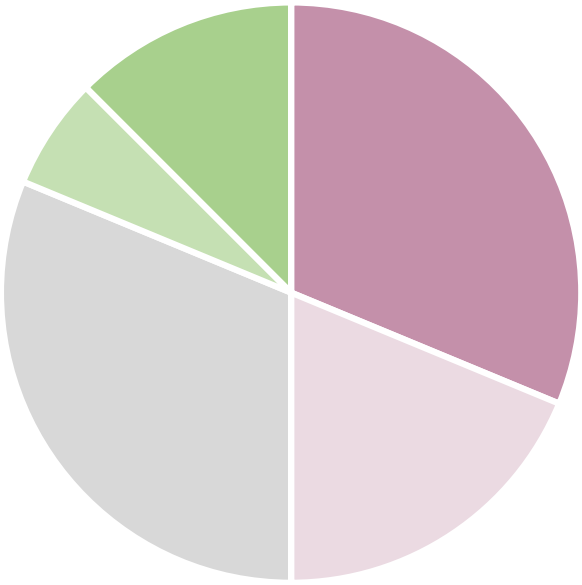
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.10.4 Merton's Climate Strategy and Action Plan sets out an ambitious target for Merton and includes our goals for a net-zero carbon future.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.10.5 Add further guidance on the re-use of existing buildings.

1.10.6 Further guidance on using existing mature trees and vegetation.



Strongly disagree	31%	[5 respondents]
Disagree	19%	[3 respondents]
Neither	31%	[5 respondents]
Agree	6%	[1 respondents]
Strongly agree	13%	[2 respondents]

1.11 FEEDBACK: CASE STUDIES

ANALYSIS

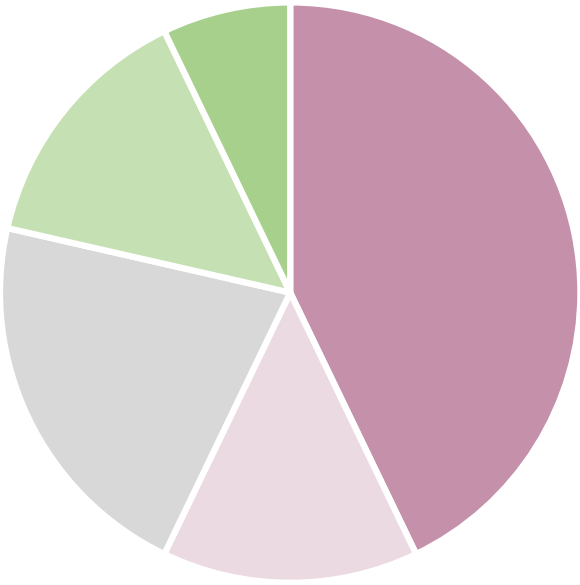
1.11.1 The case studies were described as ‘helpful’ and were generally supported.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.11.2 The case studies provide information on exemplar ways to approach small site development. A diverse range of projects have been chosen to cover the variety of character found in Merton

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.11.3 Consider adding some more case studies to show different approaches to small sites.



Strongly disagree	43% [6 respondents]
Disagree	14% [2 respondents]
Neither	22% [3 respondents]
Agree	14% [2 respondents]
Strongly agree	7% [1 respondents]

1.12 FEEDBACK: DAS TEMPLATE

ANALYSIS

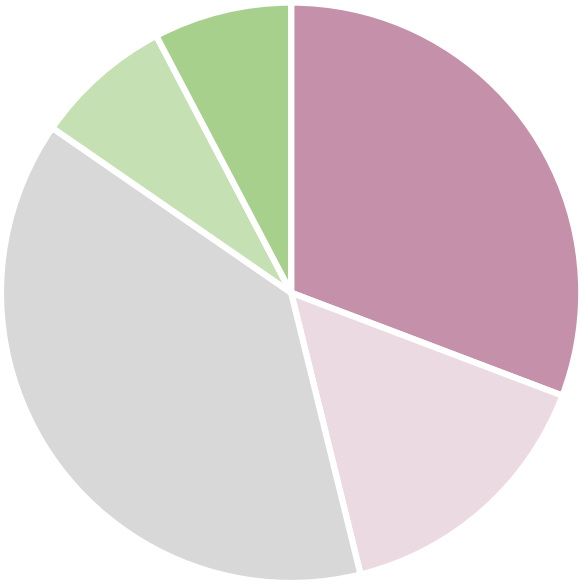
1.12.1 The Design and Access Statement template was generally supported and was described as ‘being helpful to the community in understanding the design principles underpinning development proposals.’

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1.12.2 Design and Access Statements form an essential part of the planning application and is the applicants time to justify their design decisions. The template asks key questions to make sure the applicant has thought holistically about the scheme and that the crucial design moves have been explored and tested appropriately.

SUGGESTED CHANGES

1.12.3 Finalise template and give more clarity on suggested drawings to be included.



Strongly disagree	31%	[4 respondents]
Disagree	15%	[2 respondents]
Neither	38%	[5 respondents]
Agree	8%	[1 respondents]
Strongly agree	8%	[1 respondents]

1.13 **CONCLUSION**

1.13.1 The online questionnaire was a mixture of tick box responses and text comments. Our analysis shows that there were many sections where people ticked ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘disagree’. Email responses revealed there was support for the guidance and comments from built environment professionals also believed that the guidance will help improve the overall quality of future small site development.

1.13.2 The re-occurring comments received rare summarised into the following points:
- making sure that the ambition for a net zero carbon future had a strong presence throughout the guidance.
- emphasising the value of engaging with local residents and communities.

1.13.3 The next step for the Small Sites Toolkit SPD is for it to be adopted by Council in June 2021.